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MEMOIRS AND LETTERS

OF

CHARLES BONER,

AUTHOR OF

"CHAMOIS HUNTING IN BAVARIA," &c.

WITH

LETTERS

OF MARY RUSSELL MITFORD

TO HIM DURING TEN YEARS.

EDITED

BY R. M. KETTLE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY AND SON,

Publishers in Ordinary to Her Majesty,

NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1871.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

RECOLLECTIONS OF CHARLES BONER.

My first acquaintance with one who was afterwards to be so dear and valued a friend, dates from the year in which Mr. Kingsley published an ode of greeting to the North-East Wind, calling it, amongst other things, the wind of God, and hailing it as a pleasant change from summer and zephyrs. While this defiant welcome to a common enemy was still exciting discontent and criticism, I happened to be in a bookseller's shop with a friend, whose name, if I might mention it, would carry weight with the reading public of to-day, and he took up a book entitled 'Chamois Hunting in the Mountains of Bavaria, by Charles Boner.' 'Here,' he said, 'is the true manly spirit, without any of the humbug of muscular Christianity, and odes to the North-East Wind.'*. I consider this remark as my introduction to Charles Boner, though it was not till some time afterwards that I knew him in the flesh. It was about ten years ago, I think, that we first

* Mr. Boner admired greatly Mr. Kingsley's spirited poem. —*Editor's note.*

met. I had just settled down for a time in Munich. He had not long before moved to Munich from Ratisbon, where many years of his life had passed, and where he had made the curious collection of old furniture and other quaint possessions which gave a character to every corner of his modest lodging.

High up, on the fourth story of one of those houses, which, by their opportunities of climbing, might recall his favourite Alps, Charles Boner was to be found, niched in a few small rooms, and surrounded by all his treasured associations. Facing him, over the table on which he wrote, were chamois horns, and a pair of antlers, won, perhaps, by his own prowess. A shelf, with a few favourite books, hung in one corner, and close by were the tusks of some of the boars which he had met in his forest days, and which had come off worsted in the encounter. Then there was a curious old chair, but whether it was the identical one in which the poet Campbell sat when he stayed with the Scotch Benedictines at Ratisbon, or merely reminded me of that visit made during the tour which gave birth to Hohenlinden, has escaped my memory. A massive armoire, notable for its lock, which was worthy of a prison door, and was opened by a key with a very labyrinth of wards, took up a good piece of one of the rooms, and from this, after his journey to Transylvania, Boner would produce some of the wine he had brought back with him, and make an active propaganda among his friends. This is the merest

outline, but perhaps it may be accepted as characteristic.

It may be rather a hasty generalisation to say that there are two large classes of Englishmen to be found residing on the Continent, the exile and the renegade. I use the words in no offensive sense, but merely for the sake of clearness. The exile is one who lives abroad from necessity rather than from inclination, whose thoughts, tastes, and sympathies are all English, and whose loathing and contempt for the country to which he is banished is shown in a variety of ways. This is the man who keeps up English customs, not because he likes them, but because they are English; who insists upon having English dishes, just as Byron tried to make a plum pudding at Venice; and who to the end of his life speaks the language of the place imperfectly, as much from an innate dislike to it as from more natural causes. The renegade, on the other hand, has abjured his own country, and wishes everybody to know it. If he could forget his own language, he would do so gladly; he never speaks it without provocation. He adapts himself zealously to all the habits of the country which he has made his own; goes to bed at eight in Germany, breakfasts on a small roll and a cup of coffee, and finds that there is nothing equal to beef boiled to rags and *sauerkraut* for twelve o'clock dinner. Boner had lived long enough in Germany to be accustomed to all the ways of the people, but he steered an even

course between the two extremes. He was able to maintain at the same time a vivid sympathy with the nation in the midst of which he lived, and that to which he belonged. I do not know that I ever found him give an undue preference to either. He was ready to look at things from an English or a German point of view, according to circumstances, and in any national quarrel he could take an impartial view with which both sides ought to have been contented. There was a quarrel of this kind soon after I came to Munich, but the public has long since forgotten it, and I need not revive old animosities.

The secret of Boner's agreement with those among whom he lived was his readiness to oblige everybody. He entered heart and soul into the interests of all with whom he came in contact. If a friend published a book or painted a picture he would do his utmost to bring the fact before the public. If any one suffered what he thought an injustice, his sympathy or his help would at once be offered. Was he intrusted with a commission of any kind, he would not rest till it was executed. Whatever business of his own was in progress, it was delayed or sacrificed without a murmur. In one respect this spirit of self-devotion had an effect which was somewhat misleading. The readers of 'Chamois Hunting' will no doubt remember the cordial terms in which the author spoke of Bavarian peasants, and the friendship which they seemed so disposed to

show him. In reality this friendship was reflected back from Boner's own heartiness and sympathy. Either the peasants warmed to one who was so cheery and genial himself, or else he imagined that he communicated to them that spirit which he himself manifested so freely. Whatever may be the explanation, it is certain that others have found the Bavarian peasants very different from Boner's pictures; and I have heard from some who have been with Boner on some of his country excursions, that the treatment he then received did not bear out his sanguine descriptions.

It is no reproach to a man that he takes too favourable a view of life; indeed, he may fairly retort upon others that their view is just as likely to be erroneous as his, and that without a definite standard we cannot say which of the two views is nearer to the truth. Yet certainly those who, like Iago, are nothing if not critical, and, to adopt Douglas Jerrold's *pendant*, very little then, must have found that Boner's kindness extended to some unworthy objects. I do not throw the least doubt on the sincerity of his judgments: his favourite motto, which he had engraved upon his seal, was 'Truth,' and he was entitled to use it. Often, too, when we differed in opinion about the merits of a man or a class, he was the more likely of the two to be right, as his knowledge was far greater than mine, and he brought to all German questions a judgment which might be biassed, but was not warped. An intimate

acquaintance with the private life of one of the chief families of the Bavarian nobility enabled him to form his own opinion of the whole order, while I and other English judged it from the outside. Of course we might think him prejudiced, while he knew that we were ignorant. But it may be said in the fullest sense that with him differences of opinion never altered friendship. The chivalry with which he took up your cause, or fought by your side in a combat, was not affected in the slightest degree by the consciousness that on other questions he and you would be in opposite camps.

But although Boner's views of Germany were generally more favourable than those expressed by most Englishmen, he never hesitated to find fault when he thought it was needed. He wished to impart his own sincerity to others, and fancied that others would be as ready as he was to tell the truth without regard to the consequences. A striking instance of this occurs to me. While the late King of Bavaria was building the Maximilians Strasse in Munich, and trusting that the street called after him would eclipse, as there is good chance of its doing, the street built by and called after his father, a critic in a Leipsic magazine published a very severe criticism on the new order of architecture created for the occasion. Boner, who thought the criticism just in the main, brought it to the notice of one of the royal secretaries, whose duty it was to make extracts from the papers for his majesty's

perusal, and asked him to include the criticism among these extracts. It appeared to Boner that the king would be glad to know the truth, and that the secretary was bound to be impartial. And while Boner was present the secretary took the same view. But the moment Boner had left the room, the secretary began to inveigh against his simplicity in thinking that any unfavourable criticism would be brought before the king, and scouted the idea of disturbing the monarch in his Fool's Paradise.

Again, Boner exposed himself to some unpopularity in Munich by calling attention to the way in which the old pictures in the gallery were treated. The modern Athens, as it calls itself, showed itself indifferent to the state of its treasures, but extremely sensitive to any attack made upon it. However, many of the facts were beyond dispute, and though in some respects slight inaccuracies may have been found in Boner's article, he fully vindicated his sincerity. These are points to which I particularly call attention, as they reflect the greatest credit upon the fair and honest spirit of the man.

Such, stated shortly and without any attempt at entering into the details that would be interesting to common friends, but might seem too minute for the public, were the qualities by which Boner made himself esteemed and valued. Modest and unobtrusive as he was in all that concerned himself, he would perhaps have preferred this slight tribute to

his memory, which he would have felt to be sincere, to a more elaborate portraiture.

"EDWARD WILBERFORCE.

Harcourt Buildings,
Inner Temple.

Trieste, January 10, 1871.

MY acquaintance with Charles Boner dates from the time when he came down to Trieste on the occasion of the Emperor Maximilian's funeral. He called on me, and told me who he was, and his name ensured him a ready welcome. During his stay here he was constantly at my house—I believe every day—and the intercourse was soon that of friends of old date, and it was as such that he was regarded by all my family. He won upon us all so much, that it was with genuine sorrow we bade him good-bye.

I do not believe I ever met any man so thoroughly, unaffectedly simple. The simplicity of his daily habits went through his whole nature, and gave to his conversation a peculiar charm, with a sort of flavour of Germanism about it that was deep and quaint at the same time.

Indeed, of Germany itself I never met any one who knew so much,—but I never knew any one who understood *Germans* as Boner did. He had imbibed no small share of their best attributes. He had the patience, the gentleness, the love of nature,

and that enjoyment in life, as mere life, which gives such a charm to the German nature.

I had ample opportunity of knowing how his writings are esteemed in Germany, and what a value is placed upon his book on Transylvania, and yet all the praises then bestowed upon his work were weak and faint beside the hearty appreciation men had of the writer himself.

Baron ——, the Vice-Governor of this Province, an intimate friend of Boner's, repeatedly urged him to write on Dalmatia such a book as he made on Transylvania. There had been a confidential correspondence between them, and the Baron assured me that Boner's letters were full of interest, abounding in historical knowledge of the country, and giving ample proof that he would have brought to the subject a mind richly stored with materials.

I cannot lay my hand on the last note he wrote to me—I think about a fortnight before his death, and when evidently he had not felt the approach of death, where he speaks of his illness, almost thanking it for the affectionate cares and solicitude it had brought around him. He was under his daughter's roof, and he could not be grateful enough for all her love and kindness. I dare not trust my memory for his words; the sense of them, however, was, that though confined to a sofa, and unable to leave it, he was laid beside an open window, from which he could see the country and feel the fresh air, blessings unspeakable to a sick man. 'I have,' said he,

'a daughter's loving care and kindness, and a number of pleasant memories to cheer me—do I want for more?'

He was a man of strong convictions, and not without some prejudices, but most tolerant of the opinions of others, and with a generosity towards those who differed from him, that I never saw surpassed. Of this trait I can speak with gratitude; and by a strange perversion I turn to the few occasions on which we were not like-minded, to remind me how much I loved the man—how dearly I prize his memory.

CHARLES LEVER.

LETTER FROM BARON LIEBIG, PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL BAVARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES.

Munich, April 22, 1871.

MY DEAR MARIE,

The death of your father has filled me with the deepest grief; you have lost in him the best of fathers, and I a dear, confidential friend.

It is now eighteen years since, upon settling at Munich, I became acquainted with him, and from that time we have been bound together in the truest friendship.

His poetical nature, his sincere and open character, his heart alive to everything great and

beautiful, made him dear to all who knew him intimately.

Although he had not made natural science his particular study, he yet took the warmest part in all my labour. His love of nature, his fine gift of observation, which displayed itself in all his works, proved him to be a true inquirer; and he possessed the rare gift of putting before his readers in the pleasantest way the mode of life, manners, and peculiar features of countries and their inhabitants.

God comfort you in your affliction.

With true sympathy I remain
Entirely yours,
F. LIEBIG.

To Frau Marie Horschelt.

Translated from the German.

LETTER FROM BARON ZERZOG.

Nairitz, near Bayreuth,
February 14, 1871.

WITH regard to the inquiries which you have addressed to me, I shall gladly do my best to answer them. We are no longer living at Regensburg (Ratisbon), but settled here in the country. My dear wife, to whom your letter was written, is no longer with us, she is laid in her grave at Regensburg.

Boner came as English (travelling) tutor into the household of Prince Thurn und Taxis in the spring of 1840, and remained at Regensburg until

March, 1860, when his twenty years of engagement terminated, and he settled at Munich.

During this long period he led a very retired life, devoting himself to his duties, to his friends, and to literary labour.

With the exception of a few journeys to his home, some excursions in Austria and Italy, and the nearer neighbourhood,—such, for example, as hunting-parties in the woods, in the mountains of Bavaria and the Tyrol, and visits to Prince Leiningen (the brother-in-law of Queen Victoria of England), who frequently invited him to his hunting castles, Boner lived constantly at Regensburg.

During this time he completed most of his literary works. He wrote diligently in English periodicals (the 'Athenæum,' 'Literary Gazette,' and others), articles on German science and art, founded upon German writings; for instance, those of Anastatius Grün (Count Auersperg), author of 'Der letzte Ritter,' 'Professor Masius' 'Thier Studien,' 'Songs of the People,' &c., &c. He also published a good deal of original poetry, 'The Hunt in the Royal Forest,' 'Cain,' &c. Here also he wrote his well-known prose narrative, 'Chamois Hunting in the Mountains of Bavaria,' which made a great sensation in England.

Through association with the natives and diligent study, he had acquired a knowledge of the German language to which very few foreigners have ever attained, not only so far as regarded reading,

writing, and speaking, but for the delicacies and beauties of form and harmony, expression and purity; he had such a fine perception, such a true intuition, that he might have been taken for a person born in Germany. Yes, even for the songs of the people—for dialects—he had such a perfect understanding, as could scarcely be deemed possible in a stranger to the country.

Kobell's 'Bavarian Poetry' gave him the greatest pleasure, and the so-called 'Schnadehüpfl,' one of the old Bavarian thorough national specimens of the poetry of the people (upon which he wrote a very spirited article in the 'Edinburgh Review'), inspired him with the most unfeigned delight. I had very frequent opportunities of remarking his correct taste and discrimination for original and national works. An old Bavarian mountaineer could not have felt more deeply or laughed more heartily over one of these outbursts of warm-blooded Bavarian excitement, or more quickly have detected a mistake that ran counter to the spirit of the people's language.

He must have left behind him many remarkable notices on the topics of the day; for instance, correspondence with literary men of note, with friends, &c., &c., and accounts and sketches of travel.

Further details might be furnished by his daughter Frau Marie Horschelt, who is married to the distinguished painter of that name, and lives at Munich, Louisen Strasse, 5.

"This is all I can offer you at present. Should

you desire more particular information on any special point, I shall be ready and willing to do my best to help you. And I should always rejoice if it were in my power to render assistance to a work which is dedicated to the memory of my old friend.

Accept the esteem with which I sign myself,

Yours faithfully,

ADOLF VON ZERZOG.

Translated from the German.

MEMOIRS OF CHARLES BONER.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

"The gay greenwood; 'tis a lovely world
With beauty that's all its own,
And pleasant it is in summer time,
To roam through that world alone."—C. B.

ANY one who has travelled in fancy with Charles Boner in Transylvania,* the "Land beyond the Forests," will admit that a more kindly buoyant spirit never cheered a wanderer on his way, or raised up friends and well-wishers beside his path. He gathered knowledge as he went along, from the plants that grew around him, and through the signs of that daily life into which he cordially entered, and his observations are the result of careful experience.

The total absence of egotism, although the author's personal presence is felt in every page, gives its principal charm to Mr. Boner's work on the great eastern province of the Austrian Empire, concerning

* "Transylvania; its Products and its People," by Charles Boner.

which Mr. Boner says, "In the Austrian crown are many jewels, but none of greater price than the pearl which was set in the venerable old diadem after Prince Eugene's victory over the Turks at Zeuta."

Would that he could have imparted the genial tone which pervades this book to other narratives, and imbued the minds of English tourists with the same contempt of difficulties, the same hearty desire to see the bright side of everything, which makes this record of wanderings in a country without hotels, without railways, without most of what are the necessaries of life to a fastidious Englishman, a delightful book of travel and adventure. This hitherto almost unknown region is made familiar to us by him, with its vine-clad hills sloping towards the sun, its grand mountain barrier, its Saxon, Roumanian or Wallach, and Hungarian population, and its fortified burgher strongholds.

There, living in the Saxon cities, and tilling the fields cultivated by their forefathers, after the same fashion, and with the primitive style of implements, the German emigrants preserve their hereditary costumes, customs, and manners, after seven centuries of isolation. Their corn is still stored in the churchyards, as it was hundreds of years ago, when Gottesacker was the only place of security.

The same bright, hopeful spirit is shown in another work by Mr. Boner, under the name of "A Guide to Travellers in the Plain and on the Moun-

tains," an unpretending volume, yet revealing the bold mountaineer in every page—one who has stood often firmly on the spots he describes so vividly, with the stones slipping from under his feet on the brink of a precipice and scarcely an inch between him and destruction.

The counsels of a man who has seen the storms sink and burst day after day, the rain-floods sweep down the passes, and cloud and mist blur out the familiar features of the heights, one after another, should not be despised. Be shod, he says, not after the fashion of cities, but firmly and without pressure; procure on the spot, as he recommends, your inexpensive Rück-sack, a Tyrolese Joppe and Wetter mantle, and a light tough unbending iron-shod pole. Above all, provide yourself with the double-proof armour of contentedness and forbearance, and you may walk from end to end of the mountain district, as he did many a time, winning good-will on the way.

That Charles Boner was well qualified to offer suggestions to the mountain traveller, is evident from his work on chamois-hunting in the mountains of Bavaria and the Tyrol. Owing to his intimate friendship with and long domestication in the family of Prince Thurn und Taxis, the great chases and forests of the Austrian nobility, the royal Bavarian domains, and the estates of Prince Leinengen, were the field of his daring but modestly recorded exploits. In pursuit of the

timid chamois he passed days and night of peril, and his exposure to every variety of temperature probably laid the foundation of the fatal illness which carried off the scholar, sportsman, and traveller at the age of fifty-five.

In one of the lovely villages in the environs of Bath, to which city he always returned with affectionate pleasure, Charles Boner, the only son and second child of his parents, Charles and Maria Boner, was born on the 29th of April, 1815.

Everything belonging to his birthplace was so fixed in his mind, that neither time nor absence could destroy it.

In 1838, when at Frankfort, he writes thus of the home of his earliest infancy: "The sunny fragrant garden, the waving luxuriant laburnums, the strong, noisy, never-failing brook that tumbled along close by the house under an old willow, the gardener's cottage opposite, are all before me now."

While at Weston, Mr. and Mrs. Boner's children were constantly carried to breathe the still purer atmosphere of Lansdowne, where they wandered about all day, and frequently entered the cottages.

This early living so much in the open air and in the fields may have in some measure inspired him with the love of the country and for rural objects which he always retained. "For, I believe," he says, "all that we see around us in our tenderest age gives a colour to our after-thoughts and tastes, even without

our knowing it; as the air imbibed in youth either weakens or invigorates the frame throughout after years, so the principles, either political or others, which a youth hears in the circle he lives in, are sure to be the same which he adopts and defends."

In this tranquil retirement among good and religious people, the child grew to be a picture of robust health and beauty, until six years old, when a severe injury, inflicted by a youth in the pride of superior strength, changed the joy and hopes of his parents into long enduring grief and anxiety.

Mr. Boner's family had now removed to a larger house.

"This new house was commodious and well situated, and has been to me the scene of many important events. There I received those hurts which made me an invalid during so many years. It was there, too, that I began to understand in some measure the circumstances of our family, and those things which happened around us; and it was in the house in Bedford Street that difficulties arose which obliged us to leave it, and made the succeeding years sad and gloomy. Here also my education was carried on; here, under my mother's eye, I pursued my various studies, which were so long and so unhappily interrupted.

"In writing, reading, arithmetic, English grammar, and Bible history, I knew a good deal for my age, and worked with satisfaction and pleasure. I must have begun very young, for already I had

acquired much, and,—owing to my mother's excellent clear method of teaching,—very perfectly.

"This was a happy period of my life. I enjoyed perfect and robust health, and was learning and playing by turns, so making each the sweeter. It is very difficult to calculate what would have taken place had this or that not happened, for, the slightest event displaced, everything that follows is altered. I have often speculated on what I might have been had my severe illness not attacked me; I have considered what I have lost by it, and then I have seen how much I have been the gainer, so that I have hardly been able to say, 'I wish it had not happened.'

"By this illness my studies were sadly interrupted: I no longer walked regularly, I was given way to so that I became a spoilt child. But by being prevented taking corporal exercise, and being obliged to stay in the house and remain upon the sofa, other faculties were brought into play which might not have been elicited till a later period. By thus staying at home I was thrown among grown-up people, heard their conversation, and asked the meaning of many things I did not understand; besides this, not being always able to amuse myself otherwise, I was obliged to think about what I had already heard, seen, or read, to make castles in the air, and form plans about a hundred things which might or might not happen.

"I heard many subjects mentioned which I could not comprehend, and concerning which I did not

like to ask for explanations; but, as I was anxious to find out their meaning, and to reconcile what appeared to me incongruous, I set to work alone, turning over the matter in my mind, placing it in various points of view, and so trying to come at the real sense and make all agree together. Many a time do I remember having done this, and having been baffled again and again, finding this unlikely and that impossible; until at last I discovered the real meaning.

"When unable to walk about, it was a particular pleasure to me to be carried to our carpenter's (a most worthy, respectable man), and amuse myself there in seeing the wood planed, and sawed, and chiselled, and made into different implements.

"But here, too, I often saw many things and many instruments whose use was quite unfamiliar to me. Taking the unknown object in my hand, examining its form, how it was held, &c., I would at last puzzle out the proper use of it, and this finding out without the help of another was always extremely gratifying to me. The little portion of knowledge thus gained gave me more pleasure than if it had been communicated by a second person.

"I was about six years old when my hands were hurt. This evil, (if, all things considered, it may be so called) was the result of my own disobedience. One day when playing with a young man who was studying in my father's house (which was contrary to his orders), I refused to do what the youth

wanted me to do, and he squeezed my hand to make me give way, but in vain, for, little as I was, I had the courage to hold out to the last. Nor did the pain it caused me induce me to speak to my parents of it. It would never have been known had I not been one evening sitting on my father's knee, in the back drawing-room, reading a little book, when he observed that my left thumb was swelled, and, by questioning me, discovered the cause.

"The following morning the doctor ordered several leeches to be applied, and from that day forth for nine years, I suffered severely and continuously. Yet I had my seasons of enjoyment, when, for a few hours free from pain, I hopped about the room and desired nothing in the world.

"After a time, too, I became so accustomed to the frequent operations, painful applications, and necessary restrictions, that I felt them less. During one time of illness, whilst we were in Bedford Street, and when I was not permitted to move about, I amused myself entirely with reading. My father had a large library, and our acquaintances were constantly sending books to entertain me. At this time I read the 'Arabian Nights,' which afforded me great pleasure. I read them from morning till night, never stopping or giving attention to anything else, as I read all books that gave me pleasure.

"'Gulliver's Travels' I also read, and, though of course I could not enter into the witty satire of Swift, they pleased me as an amusing story, par-

ticularly that part where Gulliver is among the Lilliputians. His good humour towards the little creatures, putting them in his pocket, and opening his mouth and making believe he would eat them, I found very much to my taste.

"Then 'Don Quixote' and poor Sancho were next laughed at by me. That is indeed a charming book, so full of incidents, and related in such an easy, flowing, and natural style. 'Evenings at Home' was also lent to me, containing conversations on chemistry, acoustics, hydrostatics, pneumatics, galvanism, magnetism, &c., &c., which gave me a general notion of these things, and told me enough to make me wish to know more.

"Another work which afforded me endless amusement of every sort was an Encyclopedia (the London, or Edinburgh, I don't remember which) in eight folio volumes, belonging to my father. Here, then, I could read at my will on any subjects I chose. One thing led me to another, and one volume was seldom enough to have by me. With this book I could occupy myself a whole day, for if I found one subject a little too dry or tedious, it was easy to turn to another less deep, or to look over the plates of skeletons, of the planets, of flowers, animals, machines, instruments, in fact, all that was therein.

"When nothing better was at hand I amused myself with—a book which no one, I am sure, could imagine would amuse a child,—'Bailey's Dictionary.'

This dictionary contained technical expressions, old proverbs and their meanings, and that which pleased me more than all was the derivation of the words. Here I could see the Saxon, Danish, German, and French words by the side of the English ones, and I found it very curious to observe how nearly they were sometimes connected, and how they were changed little by little when introduced in another tongue. Besides this I saw a great many words I never had heard before, and the meanings Bailey gives are always clear and exhaustive, so that really (though many may laugh at my saying it) I found 'Bailey's Dictionary' a very amusing book.

"'Plutarch's Lives,' part of which I then read, made a strong impression on me. Besides these, an immeasurable quantity of little books, such as 'William Tell's Life,' and pretty tales, were soon dispatched. Amongst these I do not remember to have ever had one of those coloured picture-books, with stories in rhyme, which children generally like. I do not recollect to have read any poetry, except a collection of pieces which my sister and myself had. Amongst those I learnt was 'The Dying Christian to his Soul,' which my dear sister taught me in order that I might repeat it to my mother on her birthday. As in after years I was contented with any sort of book, so it was with me in my childhood. In the morning I have often placed myself on the ledge of the book-case, and there sat for five hours alone, reading in

every sort of book. I have often smiled when detecting myself conning over some worthless piece of paper which contained printed lines. Many a scrap of law have I picked up from the paper wrapped round a parcel, and been woefully disappointed to find that an interesting sentence at the bottom of the page was not continued on the other side of the leaf.

"So completely had this habit grown upon me, that before going to bed in the well-remembered little inn at Twickenham, I have opened the drawer of the old-fashioned looking-glass, and have been sure to find some quaint ballad, or long paragraph cut out of a country newspaper, and it has amused me to read them and to imagine a thousand things about the landlady's daughter, to whom I knew they belonged."

In the hope of re-establishing Charles Boner's health, his parents alternately spent some time with him at the sea-side. To Charles Boner, as to many other studious, imaginative children, the first sight of the grandest objects of nature gave less pleasure than the description had afforded. He records some first impressions thus:

"The first sight of the sea at Weston-super-Mare in September, 1821, did not make any particular impression upon me, though subsequently this mag-

nificent sight affected me deeply. I remember the day when my father left me to return to Bath, and the evening when my mother came down to see me, as vividly as though these events had happened yesterday. When going to the bath one morning, I and the servant were nearly drowned. The baths were on a rock, which formed at the flood a small island; the tide was rapidly coming in as we crossed the sands, we were too far advanced to retreat, and could only hasten forward with all possible speed. The water was on each side of us, and just a moment after we had stepped on the rock all was sea; a minute more, and my career had been closed."

Although his health retarded Charles Boner's education and rendered his studies desultory, he still contrived to profit greatly, though not as much as he might have done, by his father's varied and extensive knowledge. His beloved sister, the companion of his childhood and youth, so often mentioned in Miss Mitford's letters, tells us that in the autumn of 1827, after he had been for two years at school in Bath, her brother was taken to Tiverton and placed under the care of Mr. Gloyn. He also attended the Tiverton Grammar School. His god-father, the Reverend Edward Griffith (afterwards vicar of Penzance), being then a resident at Tiverton, probably influenced his parents in this choice. In 1828 or 1829, he returned to their home in London.

In the year 1831, Constable, the eminent English

landscape painter, who was then at the height of his fame, entrusted to Charles Boner the instruction of his two elder sons. The intimacy thus commenced led to a life-long friendship with his pupils and their father.

Captain Charles Goldney Constable, writing on the subject of his friend's decease, in April, 1870, says, "I knew Charles Boner nearly forty years; he lived with my father between the years 1831 and 1837, as tutor to my brother and myself, and he was so kind to my father and gave him such valuable aid that he could not do without him. Charles Boner looked after his private affairs for him, and helped him very greatly in preparing and writing his lectures on landscape painting, and he wrote the letter-press to my father's book of engravings, called 'Constable's English Landscape.' I was a child when our friendship began, the longer we lived it was to love each other more and more."

During this period of domestication in the house of the great painter, Charles Boner commenced that study of art, and cultivation of eye and taste, which he pursued throughout his whole after life. In speaking with high commendation of Leslie's "Life of Constable," in 1865, Mr. Boner said with emotion, "*I* ought to have done it. No one could write such a life of Constable as I might have done."

In March, 1870, to his former pupil, in one of the very last letters he ever wrote, Mr. Boner thus expresses himself—

"At the great International Exhibition here (Munich), last autumn, I had the opportunity of *seeing* what I have often heard mentioned by an Englishman who knew the French school of art well. He told me the names of all the French landscape painters of note who were students of the works of Constable, and said all the best men were founded on him. It interested me exceedingly, as you may suppose, to *see* this. Hardly had I begun going through the French department when the traces of your dear father's style struck me at once. There I saw verified all that had been told me. It was very striking, quite plain and indisputable.

"If there were to be such an exhibition as you speak of—Wilkie—Constable—I, too, should be much pleased. It would bring up some of the fine works whose whereabouts we know nothing of; it would lure them from their hiding-places in the provinces, and heaven knows where. The Salisbury, the two uprights, and Derham Mill, are in my room, where I am all day, and never tire of looking at them. My visit to Suffolk with you, in the summer of 1865, was a great delight to me. I never could have believed it possible that out of such material such grand works could be made. Think only of that puny miserable lock and then look at the picture!"

"Five years ago, in 1865," Captain Constable writes, "I spent a few days in company with Charles Boner, in Suffolk. We lodged in the village in

which my father was born, East Bergholt; the trees there were very beautiful; as we were walking about one day together, Boner stopped and suddenly grasping my arm, exclaimed, 'Charlie, I see your father in every tree!'

"Boner had never before been in that part of the country, but he was so well acquainted with the drawings and sketches made by my father in and near Bergholt, that it was no wonder he felt, when walking about there with me, familiar with the scenery. My father was famous for his splendid drawings and studies of trees in black lead pencil. I quite understood Boner's feeling. I felt the same myself. I dare say you have read 'Memoirs of Constable,' by C. R. Leslie, R.A. If so, you may remember mention being made of a very painful illness my father had, rheumatic fever, at his house in Charlotte Street. I have never forgotten how Boner was up night after night attending to him. I wondered how any man could be strong enough to do it. Charles Boner must have loved my father very much, but I think all did who knew him.

"Last spring I was talking to George Leslie, A.R.A., of what Boner had written to me concerning French art and my father's pictures, when he said, 'Oh, yes, that is very true.' He had just been to the private view of the Royal Academy, and he told me he there saw a landscape by a French artist: 'parts of the picture,' said Leslie, 'you might have thought had been painted by John Constable.'"

Mr. Boner related with genuine pleasure the following anecdote relative to his friend Charles, the great painter's son, his own former pupil.

Captain Constable, while travelling in Suffolk, was talking to his companion in the coach, a perfect stranger, who suddenly interrupted the conversation by saying, as they approached East Bergholt—

"Sir, you are perhaps not aware that we are now passing through Constable's country."

In a letter written after his tour in "Constable's country," Mr. Boner expresses his own feelings on visiting scenes of which he had thought so much and seen so many representations.

"August, 12, 1865.

"I was for two or three days at East Bergholt with Charles Constable, going over all the old places where his father lived, where he loved, and was inspired by the beautiful scenery, and became a painter. I saw the scenes of all his great pictures, spots which were familiar to me though I had never been in Suffolk; for Constable so often talked to me about them, and I had seen so many sketches of them under various aspects, that it seemed at last as though I too had lived bodily among them. But to find myself in reality there at last produced a strange effect, and, as I told Charles, the real world of East Bergholt was to me more dream-like than the familiar one of my imagination. We saw the mill

where his father's name is carved on a beam, the house where his wife had lived, and the lanes through which he must often have passed—in short, every tree and cottage reminded me of him.

"You have no doubt read Leslie's 'Life of Constable;' but to know all the beauty and sweetness of that man's mind one must have been with him *always*, as I was. It was doubly pleasurable to visit these places with his son, who worships his father's genius. 'This is sacred ground,' he would say, as he approached some spot where his father had sat while engaged on one of his great works."

In the following, taken from private papers—we trace the growth of this remarkable mind:—

Written in the evening, Feb. 7, 1831.

"38, Albany Street.

"SENECA most truly observes, 'He who has my time owes me a debt that gratitude can never repay.' I would that all could be made to feel how valuable time is, to see its worth, and to know what they lose by wasting it. Ye who are young, who are thoughtless, who are idle,—oh, could you have but the smallest idea of what incomparable benefits you deprive yourselves by wasting in youth, time which you can never recall, I am sure that hardly an hour would be spent by you in a frivolous and useless manner. When young you think the advice of age a long, dull sermon, without truth and without foundation, that you

have plenty of time to spare, and that if you begin to use that time at a future period, it will be quite soon enough. Oh, poor mistaken creature! I pity thee—most sincerely do I pity thee. I have felt the sorrows attending on waste of time.

"Though no longer a child, I have been one. I have lived through that happy period on which, well regulated, our future happiness so greatly depends. I have had advice, and, woe is me! neglected it; I have grown older, and have rued it—bitterly rued it. Youth, should ye see this (but how should ye? as no eye but mine own will ever peruse it); however, suppose it possible or likely, you will see my disinterested *thoughts;* surely, then, you may trust to me; I advise you, entreat you, not to waste that precious time, but to use it as a miser would employ gold, dividing it and portioning it out to the greatest advantage, never letting the smallest part lie idle. The longer you continue to squander time the more difficult will you find it to employ it well. As rust eats up hard iron, in like manner will your mind and its faculties become rusted; and, like the crystal spring, which, while it continues flowing, is sweet and good, but whose stagnant overflow becomes unfit for use, so will your mind after its long bondage be incapable of action.

"Now I have done; yet, ere I quite finish, I must again entreat you, as though you were my brethren, to use with care your precious time, remember it is never to be recalled, and that even while you

draw in a breath of air a part of your life is gone, irrevocably lost; every second gone, and you have approached a step nearer to your end.

"C. B."

At the time when this earnest appeal to the young and thoughtless of his own generation was made Charles Boner could only have been about sixteen years of age. Certainly, whatever may have been his errors in wasting time before that period, he committed few afterwards. His whole life was one of steady application or of active toil. In study, in the pursuit of sports, and subsequently in his arduous discharge of the duties of the post he had undertaken at Vienna, he got through more work than most men, and did it better. On looking through his papers one is filled with wonder at the immense number of subjects which employed his thoughts; and, could more of his letters be traced, no doubt they would lead to the discovery of fresh fields of knowledge and of observation which he thoroughly explored.

His mind was early attuned to serious impressions, and lifted by the love of Nature up to Nature's God. He writes, on March 19, 1831:—

"How little impression do the beauties of nature and the works of God make on some men! They will gaze vacantly on the fairest scene, on one of Nature's grandest works, which shows the power, might, and wisdom of the Deity, without feeling

the least love, awe, or wonder for that bounteous Creator of those beauteous works. What minds must they possess! How, oh, God, can they look on Thee, and not feel that

"'These are thy glorious works, parent of good, Almighty!'

"Why do they not fall down in humble adoration before Thee? Why are their souls not filled with reverential awe by Thy wondrous works, by Thy profound Majesty? How can they behold yon rapid, deep, and wide river, which for ages has rolled on unceasing, rushing on the rocky barrier, which rises stately from the depths below, to impede its rapid course, and madly dashing o'er its rugged ridge, midst clouds of spray, rages and boils in the abyss below? Yet, oh, Lord, they gaze on this beauteous scene of majesty, and never lift up their thoughts to Thee in wonder.

"C. B."

There is no indication where these lines were written, but no doubt in the scene which called forth the feelings they express. The following extract seems to have reference to one of the many periods of illness within Charles Boner's experience.

"Wednesday, March 16, 1831,
"11, York Square.

"My beloved father had just come to see me, and was sitting by me.

"Gracious God! sincerely do I thank Thee for

thy bountiful mercy. Oh, beneficent and kind Father, teach me, I pray Thee, ever to put my firm faith in Thee, and always to look up to Thee as the Ruler of all events, and make me ever think that all which may happen, though concealed by a cloud of particular evil, may yet have behind it sunshine and happiness, as by Thy great mercy I have so often experienced. Prosper, I pray Thee, all my beloved family, succour them all in their endeavours, and mercifully grant that by my efforts I may be enabled to help and assist them, and that their old age (oh, God grant that it may be an old one!) may be one of peace and comfort. Once more, oh, God, I renew my humble solicitations that all dangers may be kept far from them, and that by our being again united, all previous sorrow and unhappiness may be banished.

"C. B."

We find a remark strongly indicative of his devotional feelings appended to a passage copied from "Eugene Aram."

"'WHEN I feel the most, I am the most inclined to prayer: sorrow, joy, tenderness, all emotions, lift up my heart to God, and what a delicious overflow of the heart is prayer.'

"How truly in unison with my own feelings is the above sentence! Oh, it is, indeed, soothing and delightful to pour forth the heart to God at any

time, but when it is loaded with grief, then, oh, then, what a pleasure there is in prayer!"

Again he writes on—

"*Saturday, July* 27, 1833.—I have just finished 'Dr. Johnson's Life,' which has much interested and greatly amused me. Oh, great and merciful God, I beseech Thee that I may so profit by this example as to enable me to amend my life, and so combat and overcome my many sins, that I may deserve and receive Thy manifold blessings, and experience Thy everlasting mercy. "C. B."

During the autumn of 1833, Charles Boner's journal contains many passages of interest. He writes:

"At Twickenham, on Wednesday the 14th of August, 1833, at a few minutes past ten in the evening, my beloved father died, aged seventy-four. He breathed his last calmly and without pain—we were all with him. With a mind deeply devoted to science, ever active in the pursuit of truth until the last days of his existence, he passed a virtuous life, with the humility and gentleness of a true Christian. O God, whom it has pleased to take away from us our beloved parent, in Thy mercy be Thou with us, forsake us not, great God, but protect us with Thy blessing. O Lord, in Thy wisdom Thou hast thus afflicted us: I pray thee we may not repine at

Thy judgment, but that we may all strive to serve Thee well and truly, so that when it pleases Thee to take us hence, our death-beds may be as calm as that of him who is now with Thee.

"*September* 15, 1833.—Mr. Burgess remarked to me to-night of my beloved father: 'Ah, sir, he was a taking man, every one must be pleased with him. He had such a venerable look, sir. When I saw him the first time, when he entered the room, I was quite delighted with his appearance. He had honour and honesty stamped upon his face. *That man could not tell a lie.*'

"I have thought (nor do I think it impious or wicked, I hope it may not be so) that my beloved father was more than human. His pure, virtuous life, his patient, meek, humble, and submissive disposition, his fortitude and greatness of mind, his long-suffering under all affliction, his firm and ever steady trust in God, his belief in His justice, wisdom, and power, his placid and quiet death without a struggle, but gradually breathing less and less heavily, until at last so gently that his breath was imperceptible, the supreme moment when his spirit fled, seem all to me so superior to man's ordinary nature, as to make me think this. His very countenance seemed to charm, to win affection, to obtain reliance, and to command respect. The beauteous vision which some time before his death appeared to him, seems to have been sent to announce to him that he should soon be taken from his weary pilgrimage

on earth, to a more congenial state of happiness and glory. May he be permitted to look down upon us, to guide and protect us in our difficulties and sorrows."

So great was Mr. Boner's love for his excellent father, that he desired to have his own heart buried in the same grave. A letter was written after his death to the rector of Twickenham containing this request, but I believe there were difficulties in the way which prevented compliance.

The resemblance between the characters of the father and son, especially in their love of truth, their extensive information, and their unwearied benevolence, was very striking.

The following epitaph is to be found on the tomb in the Twickenham churchyard, in which Mr. Boner's remains rest:—

"'I laid me down in peace to take my rest.'—PSALMS.

"At this sacred spot are deposited the mortal remains of Charles Antonius Boner, who was born December 10, 1759, and departed this life August 14, 1833."

"With a truly philanthropic heart, most amiable and upright, he passed through a sorely chequered life, supported under affliction by a firm faith in the wisdom and mercy of God. Honoured and esteemed for his unsullied virtue, he was beloved by all for his humanity and kindness, and admired for his elevated mind and extensive learning. Alas! how poor are words to express the virtues of the beloved husband, the tender father, and the faithful friend.

"Requiem æternam dona ei,
Domine et lux perpetua luceat ei."

We find several passages in the son's journal which record the acute and lasting sorrow of this great bereavement. In the winter of the same year, Charles Boner writes, on December 2nd, at Well Walk, Hampstead:—

"To me memory is a pang, and I drive it from me, that I may escape its torture. Once who had my energy? What would I not have braved? It was my glory to think I should one day, by labour and by toil, do what should give me the world's gratitude and an honourable fame;—and it was my soul's joy to speak of such hopes to him, to press his kind hand, and watch his mild, sweet smile. But he has left me, and my ambition is less, my energy is depressed, I care not now for what I then did care for, yet still I sometimes feel my wonted ardour. I often long to behold loved nature in her grandest and most mighty works; to traverse strange countries, and, standing on the mountain's topmost height, to breathe the morning air, and stretch my arms to Heaven, and feel that *I am free.* My heart feels bigger and beats quicker, but then I feel *thou* art not near to hear my aspirations; again I sink to apathy, and all my energy is gone.

"C. B."

"O, death, how dreadful art thou! Thy name alone appals; at its mention the memory of the past is renewed, and joy gone by is remembered.

Those whom we loved are gone, we sigh in vain to share our joys or pains with them, thou hast not spared them. Thou canst embitter happiness and to sorrow add yet more affliction. Through thee life is but as a vision, a burst of light, and then a sombre gloom. We recall a peaceful scene of happiness that once was, and now, alas! is not; all hath passed away, and we remember it but as a fading shadow, or the cheerful sunbeam that illumines, and then doth vanish.

"O God, my certain refuge and my only strength, be Thou with me, watch over me, let Thy mercy overshadow me! Grant, God, that I may imitate the virtue of my beloved parent, that I may adore Thee as he adored Thee, and that as he served and trusted in Thee, so may I also. Help me to follow his example of charity and benevolence. humility and gentleness. Let me ever remember him with filial love, with gratitude for all his solicitude and unceasing affection. And, Lord, if the wish be not sinful, grant that he still may see me; and, finally, I pray Thee that when Thou seest fit to take me from this world, I may deserve, through Thy mercy, to meet him again in the next; and this, Father, I ask for Thy mercy's sake.

The death of his father had a permanent effect on Charles Boner's mind. Though he roused himself

from the depression it produced, and set to work with all his characteristic application, yet the solemn and spiritual mode of thought which that event produced, became abiding; as it is plain, from the lines in which he commemorated the scene of his father's death, he wished it to be.

"To see thee thus,
My father! thou who hadst bent over me
When ill or hurt, and ever comforting;
With thy mild voice allaying all my pains:
Who had instructed me, and told me how
I should love God for all he gave to me,
To worship and to trust myself to Him:
Who taught me charity and to be kind
Unto all people; storing my young soul
With lovely precepts, which thou didst fulfil.
And then thy knowledge, too, how beautiful!
So great, yet scorning not to teach a child.

"Kneeling down I gazed
Into that placid face, whose parted lips
Wore a sweet smile about them: on them sat
The kiss of the Creator, taking back
The soul it once had given. Listening
I waited for a breath to tell he lived.
It came, though it was scarcely audible:
It was the last. That holy calm repose
Was Death!"

CHAPTER II.

At this time (before and during his residence in Mr. Constable's family) his sister remembers that Charles Boner's mind was much engrossed with religious meditations and feelings. To the end of his life he appears to have entertained very serious views, and vivid conceptions of the fallibility of man, and to have judged himself more severely than others would have done. Such a mind and heart must pass through much tribulation before the all sufficiency of the one great Sacrifice for sin is realised; but, in later life, his peculiar cheerfulness and large views of human character and duty, his forbearance, humility, and charity, his constant remembrance of the claims of old age, of sickness and infirmity, and of childhood, were sure proofs of the vitality of his faith. His patience, when confined for months to a couch of pain, his recognition of remaining blessings, as well as his abhorrence in the days of health and strength of immoral or irreligious sentiments or books, were striking evidences of a heart set upon joys beyond those of earth, which, nevertheless, he fully appreciated.

"Even when quite young," Charles Boner writes, at Frankfort, in 1837 or 1838 (he was then only two or three-and-twenty), "I formed plans of regulating and training myself, and laid down a system of self-government which was to assure my becoming a *very perfect man.* Besides this I had arranged what I was to study, and how these studies were to be divided, and somewhat later the more difficult and desirable system of governing my passions was laid down. Alas, I think neither lasted long.

"During the first year of his residence with Mr. Constable—when he was sixteen, or perhaps a year older;—at which early age, this youth, whose education had been so much interrupted, not only fulfilled the duties of his station to the satisfaction of all parties, but obtained the unlimited confidence of the father of his pupils, and made himself the adviser and friend of the whole family for life—we find him recording that he had read 'Mason's Self-Knowledge.' "This book," he says, "arrested my attention very forcibly. I was delighted with the sense and beauty of the counsels it contains. Moreover, I see now how all important this self-knowledge is, how it extends itself to almost everything in life. Here too is treated fully what I had often been thinking about, and the means are pointed out by which an invaluable end is to be attained. I read it with the greatest attention, and re-read many parts many times. After having gone

through it I began in earnest the work of self-government founded on self-knowledge. It was a difficult work; many were the repulses, almost overthrows, but also many the fresh attacks. Often, when taking myself to task (and with no lenient investigation) I have been displeased and shocked at the result. But it became easier after a time. At last I often called up myself for examination, and I was often dismissed with reproaches as severe, perhaps, as any criminal ever received from his judge. These censures and reprimands I venture to say were more severe than another would have bestowed on the faults committed. Not seldom have I been so irritated against myself for some folly or indiscretion that I have resolved to punish myself for it by depriving myself of some pleasure. I lately heard an amusing anecdote, which shows me that there was nothing singular in what I did.

"A gentleman calls on another—a French gentleman—and knocks at the door. 'Entrez!'—he enters, and sees no one. The hour was early, and he thought his friend had not risen. He looks in the bed, no one is there. He hears him speak, and finds to his surprise that the voice comes from under the bed. 'Que fais-tu là, mon cher?'—'Couche là, maudit ane.'—Well, he tells his friend that he games at night, only allowing himself a certain sum of money, but, if foolishly he exceeds that, then he will not allow himself to sleep in the bed, but lies down on the floor, under it, as a punishment

for his folly and want of firmness. He had overstepped the stipulated sum the preceding night, so there he was under the bed.

"Before this time (when living alone in Albany Street) I read a translation of 'Seneca's Morals.' The book delighted me beyond measure; its noble sentiments incited me instantly to endeavour to put them in practice. I made many extracts; but was often almost infuriated against myself, by seeing how weak I was, by feeling that I *knew* what was right, and yet had not the strength of mind to avoid going headlong into what was wrong; allowing passion to take me into her whirl when virtue and reason stood full in my sight, pointing to the opposite path.

"I compared what was done in the heat of unreflecting impulse, when it was over, with the grand, exalted, almost Divine morality of the philosopher; it seemed to sneer in my face at my meanness, and I shrank with shame from the judgment I had myself set up. No man would think himself so weak unless he put himself to the repeated ordeal.

"Then there were fresh vows of amendment to be made, newer and stronger resolves for future conduct. I determined to resist, and to be the glorious creature that I had imagined man could be if he would not be mastered by, but would master his passions and not be their servant. With what enthusiasm and glowing admiration did I read the picture of a

great and good man. It seemed to me sublime, God-like,—as indeed it is. Oh, none can know how I panted, how I yearned to be master of myself, to be on the roadway that should lead towards this beautiful and virtuous state. I felt I should be so much stronger than other men, that I should stand among them with a mind stronger and more expanded because purer than theirs.

"I longed also for that which, in that constant state of being vanquished and overthrown, I never enjoyed, namely, *self-approval.* To gain this mastery seemed to me to be assuring to myself a great store of extra happiness—for happiness in my sense of the word I seldom enjoyed.

"For example, no pleasure of any kind could cause me a feeling of such unspeakable delight and contentment as being satisfied with myself for what I did always brought me. I *always* like the praise of men, but I *always* liked my own approval infinitely better. Praise from others did not satisfy me; *es war nicht hinreichend* (it did not go far enough), because I always felt that if they knew all, as I did, their praise would not be a tithe as great. But if *I* gave the praise, then it satisfied."

It is easy to gather from portions of the incomplete "Autobiography," which has been and will continue to be quoted, that a period of deep depression and a severe struggle with difficulties of various

kinds, followed the death of Charles Boner's learned and pious father, and that the subsequent loss of his tenderly-beloved mother, greatly increased his dejection. A year after his father's death Charles Boner first went to Germany, with the intention of acquiring the language. He resided alternately at Frankfort on the Maine and at Darmstadt, where he made many valuable and lasting friendships. He was always strongly attached to both places.

His health appears to have been affected by the depressed state of his spirits. On Sunday, 12th October, 1837, (two years before his removal to Ratisbon), he writes thus, at Frankfort, no doubt after recovering from some severe illness:—

"I remember to have read in an account of India and its natural phenomena, that occasionally, during the heat of a tropical summer, a vapoury cloud will float from the regions of the stupendous Himalaya mountains, where it had its birth, and wafted onward by the Spirit of Nature, scatter its vital moisture over some beautiful valley, whose loveliness and native fruitfulness are rapidly passing away from want of the living nourishment of the dews of heaven. But, when the blessing-laden cloud has dissolved itself, in a few hours the valley is green, the grass and the thick bushes once more spring up with the strength of a newly revived vigour, the gigantic trees put forth their blossoms, the rivulets are heard on their ancient course, exulting and joyful: the animals come

there to drink and be refreshed, and all wears so new an aspect that the traveller can scarcely believe it is the spot where, some hours before, dwelt languor, drought, and lifelessness.

"Even as this cloud unto the valley, is, methinks, the hour of sickness to the life of man, when hopes, fears, remembrances, crowd in upon the memory, and the tears they call forth are as dew to the mind, distracted, burdened and hurried away in the turmoil of passion. Each one is so occupied with his several 'self,' with the actual present, or that which is but immediately in advance, that to allow thoughts to intrude which have not direct reference to the little orbit of the little body would be deemed impertinent or useless.

"But when lying on the low couch in the lone chamber, free from bodily pain, the mind has no other resource but self-communion. Books may be forbidden, conversation, too, interdicted, quiet and repose enjoined. One cannot commune with the departed mighty spirits, one must not hear of the whirlpool that is in motion around. No—the sick man is debarred all this—with the present he must have nothing to do—the future—can he look forward to that? The past—that is his; he must transport himself back to the time of his youth, and the events of his childhood must be his solace and recreation; and while thus summoning before him the deeds of other days, faults, vices, passions, rise too. He is shocked at the sight of so dark a muster, a

deep grief comes over him as the remembrance dashes across the vision of some hour of childhood; the innocent infant who thus sported, the boy who sucked the dew from the flower-cup, has grown into the man who has sinned.

"We did not think we were half so bad as we find we are—there are black things into which we have hurried and knew not till now we had done them. When we toss uneasily on our pillow, and a feverish excitement makes the pulse beat rapidly, it is not always the throb of bodily pain or the flush of fever that makes us restless. Regret, anguish, for having dashed to the ground noble and high aspirings, must be felt. The longer the man, now calmed and sobered by sickness, dwells on this, the more sincere his contrition, the more ardent his wish to atone for and retrieve his mis-spent hours; he will in his heart lay plans for the future, for a better future, if he live to attempt it.

"How sweet it is to recall the fond caresses of exulting parents, the sisterly love that soothed away our youthful troubles. When we compare the fond, disinterested mother's care with the love of other women, how does that of the parent rise in our estimation. A thorn sticks in a man's heart if he recalls the hours spent in the society of some false-hearted beauty, and remembers the many lonely hours he has left some fond, confiding, and devoted girl who truly loved him, sad, anxious, and solitary, or if he thinks of the lavish presents, freely

and needlessly bestowed under the dominion of some passing fancy, while the being who truly loved him, sighed because she was so poor and could not make his lot happier.

"Oh, how does a man despise himself, how does he hate, detest, and spurn, the being that could do all this. It comes not before him as a vision undefined and shrouded, but clear as a noonday scene, and correct as though of yesterday. All is but too distinct, like the picture of one who is not master of his subject, and whose background comes forward in spite of all he can do. We do not, we cannot thus think when strong, in the flush of health, when the cheek is full and the blood runs strong and fast through the swelling veins. But sickness—no, this state is not sickness—the pale forehead, the feeble frame, conjures up all this.

"It is as when the traveller resting himself after mounting some steep hill on his journey, turns round from time to time to view the road he has come, and the woods, streams, and villages, he has left behind him. From his high up resting-place he sees the roads over which he was obliged to make his way, the mire and dirt he went through on his travels. He leaves behind with regret the distant farm or the cottage where friendship and hospitality were shown to the wayfarer; he sees the wood where he has roved with some young, guileless maiden, and he drops a tear as he beholds it; he sees in the valley beneath, the churchyard where all that

were dear to his heart, his parents and his friends, repose; he looks upward and turns on his winding path with a heavy heart, but purified and refined. He must be hardened indeed who will not feel subdued by such recollections, and if so he will rise from his pillow a better and a wiser man; he may thank God for His dispensation of sickness, for it will be a cloud bringing joy and gladness and life to his exhausted mind."

"I cannot forbear to notice the state my mind is in at this moment: I have a longing to be up and be doing; I desire nothing more than to be actively engaged in literary pursuits, and have at the present moment the leisure for it, yet strange unaccountable restlessness and indecision render it impossible for me to apply my whole attention to anything.

"The fact is that too many things, too many plans and schemes and thoughts are in my mind, they form too quickly, quicker than I can deliver myself from them. This one now presents itself to me as the most favourable, now that. Could I but resolve on *one*, and following no other attach myself to only that one, something might be done.

"But more than this, another sentiment is continually making itself felt. A vague indistinct notion of a something is ever unceasingly floating in my mind; I cannot say, I know what it is. It is a thing struggling to give itself birth, striving to

force itself into life and existence. It forces me to feel that it is to *it* I must attend, that it is that which is for me to do.

"Ofttimes, when busied with some work, my thoughts will of themselves quit the subject and turn invariably to the undefinable, unformed something; at times a light seems to brighten up these dim thoughts, and then all appears distinct and brilliant as the sunbeams when they fall upon the ocean. I go to this and begin, but after a time I find it is not what I want. I do another thing, but still it is also not *that*. I am looking as it were for something against which to measure my strength. It is as though I had a power within me which was consuming the mind for want of a vent to escape from, and breathe freely. It is as a coiled up spring that makes great efforts to unbend, but cannot."

"There are times when I am not at all disposed to work upon my 'Cromwell,' or 'Night,' my favourite works, on which I set most value. In order not to waste such moments I devote myself to my 'Life,' to which I can go when unfit for works of more imagination, or requiring mental labour. I shall look out for something else as work for odd half hours, and for the foggy days of the mind."

CHAPTER III.

"Oh, that's delight, to be in the greenwood
When all is solemnly still,
And there's hardly a breeze to move the leaves
Atop of the wooded hill.

"To watch with expectant and longing ear
For the merest coming sound,
And breathless at last, hear a rustling step
Move stealthily o'er the ground.

"And then to behold with exulting eye,
The creature with antler'd crest
Emerge from a thicket whose leafy boughs
Give way 'fore his broad brown chest.

"To behold him then stand before you there
In that still forest glade alone,
Not a bow-shot length from your own right hand,
And to feel he is all your own."

"Oh, none but a hunter can know what's felt
When long looking vainly round,
He findeth at last, by the traces fresh,
Red drops on the mossy ground.

"The flower thus stained unto him doth bring
More joy than the reddest rose,
It telleth a tale to his heart as dear
As the blush that doth all disclose." C. B.

The Royal Hunt in the New Forest.

THE turn which he vaguely felt was coming, and which was destined to develop his peculiar talents

and characteristics to the full, was given to Charles Boner's life, when, after his mother's death, he received an invitation from Baron August Doernberg, Postmaster-General, to take up his abode with him. He complied with this proposal, and some time later, after having accompanied Baron Doernberg to Ratisbon, Miss Boner informs us that her brother received the offer of a very honourable post in his family, from Prince Thurn und Taxis, Baron Doernberg's brother-in-law. This post, which he retained during a period of twenty years, speedily grew into a position of varied responsibility and confidence.

This change of scene and life gave a brighter colouring to the whole after existence of Charles Boner. He needed the breath of the forest, and the keener wind of the mountain, the free life of the chase, with its perilous pleasures and excitements, to brace the sinews and restring the muscles, relaxed by the sufferings of his boyhood.

As had been the case in his earlier engagement in Mr. Constable's family, Charles Boner's domestication in the house of Prince Thurn und Taxis, led to life-long trust and friendship. Not only the head of the house and his pupils valued his society, and reposed confidence in the talented young Englishman, but a large number of the friends of the art and literature loving Prince, invited him to their homes, and permitted him to enjoy the pleasures of the chase on their extensive properties.

In the royal domain of the King of Bavaria, and

the forests of the Prince of Leiningen, and of many of the German nobles, he pursued the chamois and other game with intense delight; and the exclusive circles of the highest society in Austria and Bavaria welcomed him with cordial kindness.

From this time he recovered health and strength, and, in the full vigour of his manhood, displayed such energy and intrepidity, in following the light-footed chamois over the crags and past the precipices of the Bavarian Tyrol, that the Edelweiss,—that flower which can only be gathered by the boldest climbers from the margin of the glacier,—frequently crowned his labours.

In the best photograph which has been taken of him, Charles Boner is represented in his chamois-hunting dress, a sprig of the Edelweiss set in his cap, and his gun slung at his back, crossing the plank of an Alpine stream, with crags and rocks, and the deep solitude he loved so well, around him.

Most of his poems bear the date of St. Emeran, Ratisbon. He passed twenty years in the family of the Prince of Thurn und Taxis.

For the boy who had been chained so long to a couch of suffering, for the studious youth, a new career in early manhood was opened by the kindness of the continental princes and noblemen, who threw open their wide domains to such an ardent lover of nature and of active manly sport as Charles Boner.

That he was such is proved by his book on

"Forest Creatures," dedicated to "His Serene Highness Ernest, reigning Prince of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, K.G., &c., &c., &c., in most pleasant recollection of days passed with him in the forest and on the mountain, in which he claims to be an ardent sportsman, untiring in the pursuit of the red deer and the chamois, but equally untiring in pursuing whatever may bring weal to the many, or afford happiness or pleasure to but a single one."

He had an enthusiastic admiration for the stag. Of this noble creature he says—

"There is no denizen of our European forests so stately as the stag. His presence is majestic, and to behold him has given delight from remotest time. Because of his noble bearing and of the pleasure which kings and princes, and knights and ladies have had in his pursuit, it was ordained of old that no ignoble hand should presume to wage war against him, such being a privilege reserved for the high and lordly only. Let the attendant circumstances be what they may, a thrill is felt when his form is suddenly seen bounding through his woodland domains. Whether you are prepared for his approach, or whether he at once stands before you and gazes steadfastly in great astonishment at you, the intruder, you are sure to feel irrepressible emotion.

"You are in the dark pine forest, where all is so lonely, and the tall firs, with their monotonous form, stand immoveable. Nothing stirs save the flicker-

ing shadows of the red trunks, and the sunbeam that comes slantingly in and hangs a great patch of light on a distant stem; it wavers and vanishes—again it creeps in and lights up the shafts supporting the glowing roof, and as you peer searchingly into the depth, it seems there is something reddish-brown out yonder in the distance. But there are many bars of light and great flashes of brightness, and a sort of net-work like sunbeams just there towards where you are looking, for the sun is sinking and is shooting red flames upwards into the sky. So you are unable to discern what it is; however, you still gaze on, and by degrees you make out a form, which grows in distinctness; after a while you recognise that the red-brown bit of colour which the rays illumined so strangely, is in reality a stag. But he has already observed you, and with head flung back and wondering eye is gazing at you intently. His antlers spread wide before him, and give him a most imposing presence; he steps slowly on, the sunlight dances along his dappled moving body; there is a dazzling confusion of passing gleams, and he has vanished, we know not whither.

"I have waited for the stag's coming at early morning, have followed him in the woods, and listened to and hastened after him in the mountains, when his roar has re-echoed from their slopes, and been answered again from afar. I know the excitement of pursuit, and the delight, and the elate

feeling when, still incredulous, we grasp the indented crown of the giant extended at our feet, and I can understand therefore how the lord of a domain should be jealous of any encroachment on his forests, and should fence them round with laws and penalties. Heaven forbid I should defend inhuman statutes or acts of savage barbarity; but it is, I assert, only he who knows all this, and has himself, at moments, been transported with an ecstacy of joy, who can comprehend how it should be possible to grow into so insatiable, all-absorbing a passion as to make a man forget his humanity, and, in all that relates to this one matter, become a very demon.

"Yet it has been so; and human nature being always and everywhere the same, the same ruthless acts would no doubt recur were they not prevented by the law. All this, however, only shows what a spell pervaded the deer-forest, and how the presence of the noble stag acted as a fascination, drawing men onward, and charming their senses that they might be maddened with one single passion.

"In fitting harmony with the appellation 'Edelhirsch,' 'the noble stag,' men have also treated him as a monarch, and given him 'a crown,' then too calling him a 'royal' hart. Nor are his movements spoken of as those of some ignoble beast. When stretched on the ground at rest, we say that he is 'couched;' and if he goes forth to meet a foe, it is not to fight, as a dog might do, but 'to combat.'

"There is picturesqueness in such terms. When

foam is round his mouth, he is said to be 'embossed.' All this, tending to remove him from the brute, to raise him, and give him certain human attributes, is evidence of the supreme delight felt in his presence and his pursuits.

"The attachment of a stag to his old haunts is a striking feature in his character; he will repair each year to the same delectable summer sojourn, as regularly as a nobleman returns in autumn to his country seat.

"In the Hinter Riss, in Tyrol, was an old stag that for years had taken up his abode on a small flat piece of land that stood out like a shelf a few hundred feet below the summit of the mountain. From this commanding eminence he could overlook the whole track, and gaze across to the inaccessible peaks opposite. I once climbed there after him, and could not sufficiently admire the glorious view over rock and valley and mountain stream that lay before me. There is nothing an old stag loves more than quiet, and here there was nought to disturb him. The spot was unapproachable save by one narrow path. Behind was a wall of rock some hundred feet high reaching to the crest of the mountain, and all around was a deep abyss that insured him from assault. Here he used to stray about, and at evening as the sun was setting behind his rocky fortress he would stand and look down upon the vale.

"A stag will not easily give up a path he has once chosen in going to or from his pasture, even

though scared away; he keeps to it as though it were the sole way through the forest. Day after day he will appear at the same place and nearly at the same hour, and this exactness has enabled many a foe to lie in successful wait for his coming.

"As a man who has lived long in the world becomes mistrustful, so an old stag is wariness itself. Unlike some greenhorn, who is off at once on the least sound of an unusual noise or at sight of an intruder, he will first watch and listen. He is lazy, too, and does not like being disturbed; should he hear steps and voices in the wood, he will perhaps lie close, though most watchful the while, and let intruders advance to his very lair; should he be sure that he is unperceived, he will let them pass by, without a movement or a breath giving sign of his neighbourhood. Yet he may deem it safer not to tarry, and when you are but a step—not more—from him, he will burst out of the thicket, crash through the entangling and snapping branches, and rush on thundering through the solitude.

"At other times he will slowly retreat before the advancing intruder, and move so quietly over the ground, that not a twig is disturbed, not a dead leaf rustles. On he will go, deliberately, step by step, listening, then stopping, peering with outstretched neck through the bushes. Thus he will reach the border of the forest, and there with head low down and nostrils distended, and nothing

moving, save his eyes, he will watch if danger be nigh. He then will quietly emerge, and pausing, look round with a stare, but for an instant only, the next he crosses the road with a light step, and is lost in the sheltering wood.

"I have spoken of the enthralling power that attaches to the deer forest, that pervades its depths, and hangs like a spell round its majestic antlered habitant, as though the magnificent creature were not a reality, but an apparition, a charmed presence.

"This influence is never so evident, as when the enthusiastic young hunter finds himself suddenly confronting the monarch whose domain he has invaded. What is it that makes him hold his breath, causes his chest to swell, as though it would burst asunder, and a tremor to come rippling on from limb to limb, till the whole body is trembling with the irrepressible excitement? Is, then, after all, the old pagan belief not false, and does there dwell a spirit in the woods? *Is* that creature other than he seems to us in the flesh, normal brute in body, but not in animating soul? And does there look out from his eyes the human consciousness of what he was, before being metamorphosed to his present shape by a spell, and now longing to be free? Some witchery it is that holds us, for we are mazed and powerless, and transfixed by his silent presence.

"It certainly is a strange influence thus exercised; never felt, at least in my own case,

with other animals. Even when in pursuit of the chamois, however great the ardour and excitement may be, however fluttering the hope and impatient the longing, there was no tremor and palpitation, it was only in the stag's presence that my limbs refused to do their office. The creature has walked forth from the shade of the closing boughs, and stopped, and turned to gaze at me; I was fascinated by his approach, and incapable of even the smallest effort, then, looking full upon me, he has moved past, leaving me still held by the oppressive sway, and it was only when he had quite withdrawn that I was free and could breathe again.

"An indifferent person, a dolt, to whom fervour in such matters is beyond comprehension, will never know this 'force;' and though time, that great allayer and calmer of passions, stills this excitement, there are some in whom it is never entirely subdued. Even should you have overcome it, and you return to the wood after a long absence, the first time you again behold the stag the old thrall will steal over you.

"I think I owe as much to my fine sense of hearing, as to my sharp sight. The very slightest rustle is not to be disregarded. Though a stag is so large an animal, yet he will move, in the densest thicket, with no more noise than a worm makes in gliding by and touching a dry leaf, or a buck escaping over the ground. How he manages I know not, but it is so.

"Look now, here he comes, silently as a shadow, with outstretched neck and horns thrown back, from between the leaves and branches. Wait one second, and don't even move your eyes. He steals forth like a fox, and as he moves he stares around. Now, be quick and steady, he is yours. In the wood you cannot be too attentive. Strain your ears to catch the faintest sound. To such attention alone I owe the two best stags I ever shot. The one, in Suabia, was in a small but dense wood. There was a rustle, but it was so low that not one in a hundred would have heard it, or taken it for anything but a dead leaf dropping to the ground. I stood motionless, with eyes fixed on the thicket, trying to penetrate the interlacing branches. I was right; something moved. I saw something like the tip of an antler, and now a patch of reddish brown. Steadily aiming, I fired. There was a plunge, and a rush, and a galloping, but presently we came to the spot where, with his majestic crown o'erthrown, the old monarch lay dead."

Mr. Boner's account of the circumstances which first made him determine that he would track the chamois, is so graphic and characteristic, that it serves fitly to illustrate this period of his career.

"Thanks to the kindness of the noble possessor of the extensive forests where I shot my first red deer, I ever afterwards enjoyed the privilege of joining his party when the season began. The woods through which we ranged extended on every

side for many miles, overlooking the Danube. It would be impossible for me to describe the sensations, the exquisite delight of that delicious time. The freshness of the morning, the deep stillness of the woods at noon, the green and golden pageantry as the sunbeams pierced through a thousand crevices in the leafy roof, the breathless expectation when a light footfall told us that the forest-king was approaching; everything that belonged to the hunter's life was full of agreeable sensations. But these delights were soon to give way to others still more exciting.

"Our party was usually joined during the shooting season, by two gentlemen who went regularly to the mountains to hunt chamois. Often of an evening, while we were all sitting over our coffee after dinner, after a day in the forest, they would relate some adventure that had befallen them while watching for a strong buck among the snowy fastnesses of the Berchtesgaden, or tell of the merry life they led on the less formidable mountains, or in the Senn Hütten of Baierische Zell; while, on other occasions, our blood would almost curdle as we heard how one of them had crept along the narrow ridge of a precipice near the Ober See, to fetch the chamois he had shot; and how, had his foot slipped, or his head grown dizzy, he must have dropped perpendicularly into the lake, far, far below him. To these tales of adventure I listened with as much eagerness and curiosity as

I had listened when a boy, to tales of shipwreck and of sailor-life; and with the same ardent longing to share such adventurous pastimes.

"The other, more susceptible, perhaps, to the glories around him than his companion would describe the scene that presented itself to his astonished gaze, when, having gained the summit of the mountains, the mists, suddenly parting, let in the golden light of the rising sun, and showed huge rocks and precipices, and green herbage, and high-up valleys, all lying at his feet. There was genuine enthusiasm in all these descriptions, and, like all true feeling, it did not fail of its effect. I could no longer resist the desire to move, with rifle at my back, amid such scenes, to step along those narrow ledges of rock, or creep up through the steep ravines which had become well-known places to me, so much had I heard about them, and so minute had been my questioning; until at last the wish I had cherished for years was realised, and I stood upon the mountain-top, and saw the chamois among the rocks.

"Deer-stalking in the forest, with all its excitement, was but mean sport compared to this. I could now understand how with some it might become a passion so strong and irresistible, that not even the hazards of a poacher's life could prevent its gratification. The magnificent scenery, the daring and the danger, the vigour and elasticity of limb which the pure mountain air imparted, the glorious sunrise gradually overflooding the plains of

snow, the loud cry of the peasant-girl ringing upwards to the very sky,—all this sent a thrill through my whole frame, and my blood felt the thrill, and tingled with exultation.

"What would I not have often given could hearty old Christopher North have been with me to enjoy these sights, to have watched the driving mists coming upwards from the valley, and to have listened for a sound amid that silence and solitude. And then, too, that other master of his art,—Edwin Landseer,—what a new field would be here for his faithful pencil! The peculiar tone of that mountain scenery, the expression, features, and bold characteristic bearing of the chamois, the occasionally perilous positions of the hunter, and much more beside, would, with his poetic mind and wonderfully skilful handling, afford such pictures as even his hand has not yet produced."

Charles Boner's characteristic truthfulness and modesty, cannot be more plainly set forth than in the first and last paragraphs of his best known work.*

"With regard to the scenes represented in Mr. Horschelt's illustrations, which need no praise of mine, I would observe that they were chosen as giving a *general* notion of the mountains, rather than of the difficult and dangerous places met with

* Chamois Hunting in the Mountains of Bavaria.

by the chamois hunter. Indeed not one of the views shows a position of peril. I was anxious to avoid everything which might appear like exaggeration; and for this reason omitted a sketch ('Descending the Mountain') which Mr. Horschelt had made, lest the daring hardihood therein depicted might excite doubts of its truth.

"In description it was equally my aim to keep rather within the limits to which I might have gone. Some forms, perhaps, appeared to me more grand, and certain bright effects more beautiful, than they might have appeared to another; but I am not aware of having given to either undue importance, or too much heightened colouring. What I saw is described as *I* saw it. My wish has been to reflect those pictures which my memory has retained; to impart to others the vivid impressions which my own mind has received.

"Be it not supposed that I mean to exalt myself into an authority; I am well aware that between my experience in chamois-hunting and that of a sportsman like my friend Count Max Arco, there is about as much difference as might be found in the military knowledge of a lieutenant who had served a campaign and that of a Wellington or Radetski. Such as it is, however, this record is a faithful one; in no instance am I conscious of exaggeration, or that a single assertion may be found which is not true.

"Charles Boner,
"St. Emeran, Ratisbon.
"January 10, 1852."

"At this time," says his sister, "Charles abandoned himself more freely than heretofore to his poetic fancies. Free from pecuniary cares, living amid picturesque scenes, and novel phases of life and manners, with the world smiling around him in a sort of Castle of Indolence, his imagination had full scope. In the summers spent at Donaustauf, the residence of Prince Taxis, near Ratisbon, he learnt by heart the mysteries of the forest and of the merry greenwood. The excitement of the chase inspired one of his best poems, 'The Ballad of the Royal Hunt;' part of which has been translated into German by his kindred spirit and chosen friend, Franz von Kobell, under the title of 'Die Jagd von Winchester.'

"The date of many of his poems (which were published by Messrs. Chapman and Hall under the simple title 'Verse') will show that he was not idle at this time, and his increasing acquaintance with German literature and poetry was preparing a solid basis for the facility of rendering them into English poetry which he afterwards attained."

Charles Boner's poetry was in fact an outbreak of the spring which had long bloomed in his heart and been nourished by the life blood of his rich imagination, fostered by the tenderest feeling. The great power of his muse, however, the real poetry of his nature, is shown even more clearly in his prose compositions than in his poetry—in his vivid pictures of 'What the Wood tells us,' and in his journeyings on foot through vale and mountain.

The eager anticipations of the huntsman—life in the fresh green woods—are brought vividly before us in his work on chamois-hunting, illustrated by his future son-in-law, Theodore Horschelt, wherein that passionate love for the noble forest life (to which he continued faithful) broke forth like the very breath of the Alps. This passion seems to have been first awakened in the Thurn und Taxis forests. He must have seen the famous Valhalla rise from its foundation stone. No wonder his descriptions are glowing and complete, and have been translated and re-translated into French and other languages.

In the following passages of contemporary criticism we find a just appreciation of the literary productions inspired by this free and congenial forest life:—

"There is an idiosyncrasy in Charles Boner's poetry which is well described in the motto from Goethe aptly chosen for this work—'Ich habe in meiner poesie nie affectirt'"—says an English critic in reviewing his then recently published volume of poetry. "He depicts impressions as they ever presented themselves to his own mind, not affecting to appropriate those of others. An honest and simple truthfulness marks all he writes—he writes because he feels, and what he feels, and nothing else. There are two several threads which run through the

tissue of his verse, and none brighter or more charming than his love of the innocent joys of childhood, the mother's tenderness, the generous and manly spirit in the riper years of manhood, and, above all, the devotional element in human nature.

"Of an entirely different class of poetry is the martial poem, 'The Battle of Novara,' where the flow of the verse well answers to the spirit and animation of the subject."

A contemporary writer, speaking of "Verse," says—

"We have always thought that Charles Boner is a greater poet in his prose than in his poetry. Verse is always restrictive, and, for the display of graphic power, offers no advantage over prose. Rhyme is a leveller, a tyrant in its way, and he is the best minstrel who can make rhyme appear the least tyrannical.

Charles Boner's "Chamois Hunting" fulfilled its conditions best by being unfettered; adventure and the freedom of mountain life lose their pith when meted out in syllables of a certain length. We feel the blood run quicker when Charles Boner with his fresh poetic prose takes us among the mountains of Bavaria.

"He is, however, a poet of great vigour. Of human affairs he can write with exquisite tenderness, or rise on the wings of imagination to a higher sphere. He is bold to a fault; he wrote 'Cain,'

where Byron had trod before; and here, in a volume of miscellaneous poems he has ventured where Keats was great, perhaps greatest. Even with Keats' rapturous poem 'The Nightingale' still lingering in our memory, we cannot but say that Charles Boner comes out of the comparison with wonderful success.

"In 'The Royal Hunt' we are introduced to the recesses of the greenwood and the haunts of the forest deer. Listen to the rush of the antlered herd as they sweep by you, the attitude and bearing of the 'crested leader' of the herd, all delineated with the fidelity of a photograph, the head thrown back, the branching antlers resting on the velvet back, the nostrils expanded, the eyes dilated, the ears outstretched, a singular blending of fear, caution, and defiance. By those who have had opportunities of observing the habits of deer in their sylvan retreats, the beauty and the majesty of these passages will at once be appreciated."

"Charles Boner has fairly won his place among the poets of the day. His translations from the German, especially of 'Andersen's Tales,' show a thorough knowledge of the language, and a facility of appreciating the spirit of the originals, which give him a high place in the field of literary labour. This volume, 'Verse,' contains translations from some of the best modern German poets: Freili-

grath, Kobell, Uebel, &c. In the 'Royal Hunt' the description of the forest scenes, and the discovery and burial of the corpse of William Rufus, are remarkably graphic."

CHAPTER IV.

"On came the deer through the sounding wood
At first like a rising wind;
Then by they swept with a growing noise,
Till foes were all far behind.

"Now on again comes another herd,
They follow their leader's track;
I' the van their chief, his embattled crown
Flung down on his velvet back. C. B.

The Royal Hunt in the New Forest.

THAT Charles Boner had an exquisite sense of the beauty of English scenery in all its aspects, we learn from his journal.*

"On the 30th of August, 1844," he writes, "I left London for Lancaster, and drove thence in a post-chaise to Windermere. Drive very pretty, with view of the sea. In the early morning (31st) in a boat up Windermere Lake; lovely morning, clear and sunny, walk to Ambleside; left my things at the 'White Lion,' and walked to Rydal Mount. To church with Wordsworth and his family. Dined with him. After dinner Wordsworth went to church

* Record of a Tour to the Lakes, in 1844.

again; I stayed with his son and Mr. Smith in the garden till tea-time, returning in the evening to Ambleside.

"September the 1st.—At Rydal Mount by half-past two to dinner. After dinner walked with Wordsworth to Dr. Arnold's.

"This walk, by the bright, sparkling, dashing waters of the Rothay, is one of the loveliest in that lovely district. The Loughrigg, or mountain road, as it is called, leads from Ambleside under the mountains and by the torrent side past Fox How, and many another beautiful and storied picturesque residence, to Pelter Bridge, where it joins the high road between Ambleside, Grassmere, and Rydal.

"After walking about the grounds for some time, Wordsworth sits down in a pretty, shady, retired spot on the stump of a tree and asks me to sit beside him, and to read to him my manuscript. A lecture on poetry and versification, as we walk homewards.

"2nd.—To Scaw Fell—cloudy—tea at farm-house.

"3rd.—In the morning to Rydal Mount. Chat with Wordsworth, and walk with him and Mrs. Wordsworth to a friend's. Afterwards I walk about alone and to Dr. Arnold's favourite spot, and dine at Rydal. After dinner stroll with Wordsworth to a hill behind the house. Visitors come. After tea had a pleasant chat with Wordsworth by the fire-side. He very kind. Goes with me to the road —particularly friendly. Talked of Lockhart, Longman, Moxon, Tom Moore, Robert Browning.

"4th.—Met Wordsworth this morning. Walked to Stock-Ghyll Force. In the afternoon Wordsworth came to me and invited me to take tea with him, and afterwards to read him something. Wordsworth before the fire, Mrs. Wordsworth reading aloud in the window-seat—Miss Ricketts working. After some time Wordsworth said: 'Well, sir, if you like, we will go into the next room, and you shall read me some of your verses.' We went; he sat in his usual way, with his head in his hand, his feet on a chair, for he was tired. I read first 'Columbus's Departure.' As I read, he said continually, 'Ah, very good, very good,' and at the end he praised it much. I read one or two, and afterwards he said, looking up, after seeming to smile for a moment, '*You'll do.* It's very good, indeed; very good. The way you have treated that is striking. It's very good. Perhaps you will read it again, sir—the third verse, will you? There are some faults in phraseology, here and there a word that could be improved, but it is very good. I should like you to read it to the ladies—to Mrs. Wordsworth—that she may have an idea what you are about. Bring it with you.' I did, and afterwards he suggested some alterations, and helped me. A long conversation afterwards about the events I could take, Battle of Marathon, and its consequences, Alexander's death. Spoke of Bulwer, Latin Poets, of the Augustan Age, Virgil, Catullus, Romans, Hannibal, Columbus and Cooke, English

character advantageously displayed in the attempt to find a North-West passage. He gave me his 'Grace Darling,' told me not to be discouraged if I meet with rebuffs, but to persevere. Southey was discouraged and turned to other writing. I said if he advised me to continue, that was encouragement enough. He said, 'Oh, by all means; your aim in that book is good, and the view you take of the subject is the right one, besides, the language is good. Oh, certainly go on with it.' After further talk, I wished him 'good night,' and walked to Ambleside.

"September the 5th.—Walked to Rydal Mount, met Wordsworth and his wife in the garden, walked for a long time backwards and forwards, and then went into the house. Wordsworth gave me a letter to Lockhart. Mrs. Wordsworth wanted him to go with her. He said, 'Mr. Boner and I will come after you,' so we went towards Ambleside, he leaning on my arm and talking of poetry, of education, of happiness, &c. &c. He begged me to translate something I spoke of, and to read it to him.

"6th.—At Ambleside, met Mr. Wordsworth. He said he would ask me to stay some days longer, but, as he was going away, he should not be able to see me. He told me to write to him from time to time, and let him know what I was doing. I said I hoped to claim the privilege of his friendship.

"'Yes,' said he, 'I do feel a considerable degree of friendship for you.'

"We parted, he shaking me heartily by the hand, saying, 'Good-by, sir, God bless you!'

"Sept. 6.—By mail to Lancaster and on to London. To the Constables'.—Found all at home, all the old things and pictures. Met Robert Leslie on his way to his father's. Home; to bed early.

"Sept. 7.—To church, penny-a-line sermon. To Lucas, pleasant afternoon and evening with him, Constable, and his wife. Talk of Alfred and Lionel, Mr. Field, dear old days. In the evening, at home writing by a nice fire."

The following is the poem which Wordsworth praised so much:—

THE EMBARKATION OF COLUMBUS.

"'The age of miracles past! The age of miracles is for ever here!'" CARLYLE.

"More than three changeful centuries are pass'd
Since, in the morn of an autumnal day,
Thousands of wandering men, together mass'd,
Stood on the shores of a neglected bay.
To see depart on his adventurous way
A grey-hair'd mariner. The waves are curl'd;
The faint dawn disappears—'Away! away!
Ere the sun rise!' The canvas is unfurl'd;
He leaves his ancient home to find a second world.
"To penetrate the mystery which hung
Around and over that untravell'd ocean;
To cleave a way where dread and darkness clung;
To overthrow each superstitious notion

Which in the minds of men can raise emotion.
He had no worldly means, small worldly aid;
But humbleness of heart and true devotion:—
This was the power with which he was array'd,
And so went forth alone, strong, bold, and undismay'd.

"Let us not err, and deem the days are ended
For God by miracles to show His will;
Though oftentimes, may-be, not comprehended,
Yet hearts devout and fervent see them still.
From out the rock He calleth no fresh rill
Of limpid water that the faint may live,
Nor now from heaven descendeth on 'the hill.'
He to the wanderer doth not manna give,
Nor wakes the widow's son that she may no more grieve.

"This strangest enterprise, the grand event;
The marvel that such light should then be shining;
The energy with which that man was bent
On carrying out the plan of his designing,
E'en at a time when youth was fast declining;
That quenchless longing, not to be subdued;
The patience that for years knew no repining;
The heart that, bowed by vast ingratitude,
Though scar'd, could not forget its wonted fortitude;

"The mind that 'midst the moving wilderness,
When dangers seem'd to rise from out the deep,
Undaunted saw, nor trusted aught the less;
The buoyant hope that, when the waves did heap
Themselves together, and with headlong sweep
Roll'd mass-like forwards, rose above them, and
With unchang'd mien its ceaseless watch did keep;—
All, all proclaim that it was God's own hand
That led him o'er the sea to find an unknown land.

"St. Emeran, Ratisbon,
"December, 1842."

FROM MR. BONER'S JOURNAL, JUNE 21, 1846.

Remarks made on reading Humboldt's "Kosmos."

I VENTURE to assert that as the intelligence progresses to a more intimate acquaintance with the secret powers of nature, the human mind, far from being less inclined to wonder, or less sensible of the sublime, will, on the contrary, as the sphere through which it may rise is enlarged, show itself capable of intenser admiration, and a higher sense of wonder at the sublimity of God's creation. We shall have poetry such as the world has not yet produced; poetry richer in imagery and allusion, and grander in conception than any the mind of man has as yet been capable of; it will be called into being by philosophy. It will be of, and it will lead to God.

Wordsworth's poetry is the flush of the great sun about to rise, and though I consider Wordsworth as now standing alone in his glory, he is serving as a guide to some mighty bards as yet perhaps unborn, whose voices, blending with the music of the universal harmony, will for that very reason overpower that of their great master. The chorus to their verse will be counted million-wise, while that to which we listen, mighty in effect though it be, has only its thousands of rejoicing and adoring voices. It will be such a song as the power of all the

zones can send, as all the hitherto only fancied spirits of earth and air and sea can produce, when the voices swell in one huge wave of sound over the face of the earth. When from the Andes and the Himalaya, when from the depths of the ocean and the remotest regions of star-illumined space, when from revivifying air, from the depths of volcanoes, and from beneath the incumbent weight of mountains that partition this our planet, the spirits that exist and live shall, as, with one glad accord, make themselves heard, in language which will be universal, intelligible to all. The spirit of the eternal glacier will comprehend the whisper of the sunny lake; and the tempest that crushes the primeval forest pine in all its size and strength, understand the breeze that dallies with the scarce opened bud tended by man's fostering care. Of the universality of such a future we have no defined conception, but only a dim presentiment.

C. B.

I read to-day the introductory preface to "Kosmos," containing the grandest and most comprehensive views of the physical world that I have ever seen. I read this with peculiar interest, for of the existence of just such a state of things as Humboldt has undertaken to describe, I, many years ago, felt convinced, and wished to have an opportunity of investigating and proving it. In a conversation with Sir William Beechey at Hamp-

stead in 1833 or 1834, I expressed this conviction, and later, in one of my note books, I find some memoranda to the same effect. I note this circumstance as interesting to myself, nor can it be otherwise when I find the notion (the cherished notion of many years) carried out by the greatest philosopher of his day; carried out, too, as far as I can judge by the forty-eight pages that I have read, on the very system I had laid down; by study of those laws by which the physical universe is governed; study, which, if thorough, would inevitably prove the existence of one great law, (modified indeed, by circumstances), pervading the whole creation.

My plan was so immense, the branches of knowledge to be acquired so numerous, that I did not conceive it possible for one life to compass it. An individual could but contribute his portion towards the complete whole. And yet Humboldt, it seems, has in the short span of existence accorded to man, accomplished what I had deemed impossible. As far as I have read, God's name is not once mentioned. It may be omitted to show how entirely the subject is treated scientifically, without any reference to a presiding power, and merely as a combination of powers which develop themselves according to natural laws.

Although I speak of the plan I had formed, of course I do not suppose the probability of my carrying it out. Though the natural bent of my mind

led me to contemplate the universe, and to see God as the centre of all, around whom all must move, and from whom all must proceed, I do not imagine myself capable of setting forth and proving by investigation that such is the case, though I am deeply impressed by that great truth.

My system, however, went farther than that which, to judge by what I have as yet read, Humboldt intends to develop. I wished to prove the *one-ness* of the laws, by which, modified according to the subject in question, *all* things are governed, both in the *moral* and *physical* world;—that the same laws pervade all art and science, the human mind, and the productions of the human mind—the physical world in which we are placed, and the development of the nations whose field of action it is;—that, as the world from chaos, so light sprang from darkness, and knowledge from ignorance; that, as sparks are elicited by electricity, there is an electricity of mind, eliciting at a touch, sensations, forebodings, and flashes of genius;—combinations, too, as inscrutable in their first origin, as the wonderful fluid which performs so mighty a part in the operations of nature. But God the end and aim of all; the perfection of Good and Power.

CHARLES BONER.

CHAPTER V.

EDELWEISS.

"The mountains deck their rocky crowns
With flowers which are the rarest,
For only on the highest spots
Grow those that are the fairest.

"Then in my songs, the Edelweiss
I praise where'er I wander,
An image of pure love, within
The stony realm up yonder.

"Like that flower it should germ, beyond
The reach of every rover,
To bloom above the common world
And last when life is over."

KOBELL—*By Charles Boner.*

WHILST in London, Charles Boner entered into an arrangement to contribute to the 'Literary Gazette.' His articles on the German poets—Dobell, Heine, Anastasius Grün, &c., brought him, however, more fame than profit. The masterly translation of passages from "Der letzte Ritter," (the Last Knight) attracted the notice of the author, who inquired about the translator; and in 1849, the Austrian noble-

man returning from the Assembly at the Paulskirche (St. Paul's) in Frankfurt, under the new order of things, sought Mr. Boner at Ratisbon. Then began his acquaintance with Count Auersperg, whom he had hitherto known only as Anastasius Grün.

In 1847, Charles Boner paid a third visit to England, when he became acquainted with Andersen, Lockhart, Lady Davy, Lady Alexander Cumming Gordon, &c.

In 1849 he achieved an object of ambition, having obtained permission to follow the chamois on a chase belonging to the king. His excursions in Tegernsee, Vorder-Riss, Hohenburg (all in Bavarian mountains) were made in the autumn of 1849. In 1850 he again visited England, and in September he witnessed the Passion Play at Ober-Ammergau.

The preparation of his "Chamois Hunting" for publication occupied him between 1851 and 1853, and occasioned a rapid journey to London in December, 1852.

In September, 1853, he had the pleasure of hunting chamois on a chase belonging to the late Prince Charles of Leiningen in the Hinter-Riss,—the wildest imaginable spot: on the borders of Tyrol and Bavaria.

In 1854 he published "Chamois Hunting," and in July Charles Boner again came to England. At this time he had the privilege of frequent intercourse with Prince Leiningen, who testified a sincere

friendship for him, and who presented him to his cousin, the Duke of Saxe-Coburg.

During the two following autumns he revisited the Hinter-Riss. In 1856 he saw Prince Leiningen there for the last time. The prince died in the same year. In 1857, the Duke of Saxe-Coburg invited Mr. Boner to Gotha, and in 1859 and 1860, the visit was repeated at Gotha and Rheinhardsbrunn.

Ardent and indefatigable, alike in the pursuit of knowledge and in the hardy exercises of the chase, Charles Boner described as a naturalist the facts which he learned as a sportsman. His book on "Forest Creatures," and his letters, show that he never lost an opportunity of obtaining or of imparting information. Up long before the dawn, on foot at dewy eve, and late into the night, reckless of danger, careless of exposure, he was ever on the watch, observing the habits of the denizens of the woods and mountains; and he combined sketches of scenery and incidents of a sportsman's life with the minutest observations of the creatures of the forest. He sets before the reader their remote haunts, "in dells and piny mountains, by quick streams, or on the silent snow fields, where the sportsman lies in waiting to hear the capercaile (tetras uruqullus) long before dawn,* and while the stillness yet reigns upon the earth like a superincumbent thing, awake and begin his peculiar call.

* "Forest Creatures," by Charles Boner.

To be out at early morning listening to the gradual awakening of animal life around, and hearing how the very earth shakes off its deep slumber; and at last to see masses of forms emerge from the gloom — is one of the most interesting incidents which form the sum of a hunter's life.

"Once, when waiting in the Fichtel Gebirge," he says, "till the cessation of the daily snow-storm should enable me to go out with my gun after a splendid cock of the wood, for love of whom I had travelled many a weary mile; I sat down and chatted with the forester's son about the woods and the mountains, the brave creatures I had hunted there, and many other matters. He listened with apparent interest to my tales of the chamois, of the delight of moving along the mountain ridge in pursuit, and of the vast realms there — eternal solitudes — of the chasms one has to cross, and the dangers that beset one's steps, so that among the crags and the snowfields death is ever nigh. But when I had finished the recital, he replied:

"'Well, I dare say it is pleasant enough to be after a good chamois, and to bring him down at last, but what is that compared to waiting for the black cock, hearing his call, watching him fluttering round and round, and listening to the rush of his wings? Why, there's nothing like it. The mountains, and the chamois, and the red deer are exciting enough, no doubt, but for my part I cannot

think the sport can even approach, in its delight, that of waiting in longing expectation of my favourite black cock's chuckle at dawn. No, no, there's nothing like that.'

"I do not share his enthusiasm in this matter, though I grant the sport is pleasurable, and that it affords an interesting opportunity for observing the habits and instincts of a wild, uncurbed, free, nature-impelled creature.

"Early in spring, before the birch trees have begun to bud, and while there is a haze over the landscape at early morning, and the dawn is penetratingly cold, the black cock seeks a mate. The sky has not yet begun to grow grey, nor has that wonderful breath which passes through the air shortly before daybreak been felt, when a chuckle is heard from the neighbouring wood, and soon after the fluttering of wings, and if you listen—for as yet you can see nothing through the gloom—you will hear the sound of the bird cleaving the air, approaching nearer and nearer, and then with a rustle alighting in the clearing, or not unlikely you may previously have caught a quavering low quacking sound uttered from time to time, by the hen, who from some low tree thus announces her vicinity. So, on the broad snow-fields in the mountains, amid the stillness, you hear the rustle and the chuckle long before the sun has touched the peaks over head; and you see black forms dancing and fluttering in circles, on the white sur-

face, as if within a magic ring. Before the hour of their arrival, therefore, early though it be, you must be at your post; and it is hard work if you have chosen the mountain's side for your sport, for at this season there is much snow, and, as the surface now will not bear, you sink at every step to your knee, or even to your waist. However, be it where it may, in a snow-field or a forest glade, you must have a rude hut made of branches to shelter you from observation." — *Forest Creatures.*

Mr. Boner's account of his conversations with the young forester proves how fully he carried out his own precepts and principles.

In his "Instruction for Travellers in the Plains and on the Mountains," he says:

"As you walk along make a point of entering into conversation with the wayfarers you meet; no matter what their station or their degree of cultivation, you will certainly learn something from them worth knowing. On the continent people are generally sociable and willing to talk and to be communicative. A friendly 'Good morning!' a question or passing remark, is sufficient introduction; and as you walk beside your new acquaintance, he will tell you about his fields, or his calling, or his future prospects, or his past life; and it must be strange indeed if you can derive neither amusement nor instruction from what you hear.

"If you wish to see a country well, you must traverse it in other directions than those whither the high road leads. The nooks and bye-ways, the path across the meadows and beside the river, the upland farms and uneven hill-tops, are all characteristics of a land and essential parts of its physiognomy. Besides, away from the high road men are different to what they are along the great thoroughfares, they preserve their national features longer unchanged.

"Passages in the description of a tour or book of travels which contain information thus gleaned in the bye-paths of history, never fail to please; they have zest and raciness and a pleasant flavour of reality. The very best bits in Walter White's popular books," Charles Boner adds, "are those in which he narrates his conversations with an old peasant, a farmer, a fisherman, or some one or other whom he met with in his walks.

"I am in the habit of talking with whomsoever I overtake on the road; and thus have often obtained very curious information. Now it was a strange family tradition, now a popular remedy for some disease of man or beast. Valuable facts on natural history are thus to be gained; examples of instinct derived from familiarity with the animal in question, by long experience, or by careful watching, are to be obtained.

"Your peasant companion will tell you some story connected with the old ruin that crowns the

heights above his village, not to be found in the chronicles.

"If you are travelling in Germany, you may hear an account of the general rising for the War of Independence, when old and young went out against the invader; and you may get a recital of hardships and details of family life, given with all the minuteness of a Dutch picture, affording a better notion of the horrors, the privations and the spirit of that time, than the most eloquent description in the pages of the historian. A living man, who relates to you what he has heard again and again from his parents' lips, what he himself remembers indistinctly,—the scenes of anguish and terror in which he, as yet a child, was an unconscious actor,—he is the real historian, his recital is the most valuable history. In the narratives of a co-actor or spectator there are life-like touches, and bits of detail which at once bring the scene described before one, and, like the studies of an artist, have freshness and reality which make a more elaborate work seem tame in comparison."

Mr. Boner's intimate acquaintance with the habits of the wild creatures of the forest enabled him to be of use to many learned naturalists, and he always imparted information with pleasure. In looking over his letters and papers nothing excites more surprise than the number of subjects which engaged his attention. Many of his observations,

revealing entirely new facts and varieties in animal life, were received with gratitude by Mr. Darwin, who thus acknowledges them:

"I have just received your two works, and have made some use of them for my present book; and I should have made more use of them had I received them earlier. You describe the grand scenery of the Tyrol most graphically, and it makes me long to be strong and young again to ramble over the mountains. My next book will not be ready for a considerable time, though part is finished.

"I am very much obliged to you for your very interesting letter, and especially glad to hear about the co-existence of varieties in the wild state. The fact relating to the variation of the wild boar is quite new to me. I hope I shall get your book soon, and with my best thanks, I remain, dear sir, &c.,

CHARLES DARWIN.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am very much obliged for your extremely kind note and the really valuable present of your work on Transylvania. I do not think I ever read a word about that country, and I am ashamed to confess that I had to look at a map

to be sure where it lay. Therefore, as soon as I have finished some books which I have in hand, I will begin your volume. You must, indeed, feel most acutely your present state of health, which I am truly sorry to hear of. My own health has been failing for so many years that I can hardly imagine the sense of vigour and the power of endurance. I must be content to enjoy the glorious scenes of nature, as described by you and others.

With every hope that you may perfectly recover your health and observe the habits of wild animals again,

I beg leave to remain, yours, &c., &c.,

CHARLES DARWIN.

LETTERS FROM THE REV. GEORGE GILFILLAN.

To Charles Boner, Esq.,
St. Emeran, Ratisbon.

Dundee, 27th February, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your poem with its kind accompanying note came last night. I read the poem at a sitting. When I remembered that Gesner, Coleridge, and Byron had all handled the same theme, I felt a little concerned at the choice of the subject. I found, however, that your treatment of it was, on the whole, new, and in many parts felicitous. Some of

the closing parts struck me as fine, and the spirit of your "Cain" is beautifully opposed to that of Byron. One line struck me much—

"Lone as the rivers of unpeopled lands."

I find many similar felicities sprinkled throughout.

In case of another poem, I should advise the selection of a theme less hackneyed, or shall I rather say less hallowed by treatment? In this case I predict for you no common success. I see your 'Chamois Hunting' much commended by the press.

Believe me, dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

GEORGE GILFILLAN.

Dundee, 3rd of May, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR,

Many thanks for your poetical pieces, all of which contain many beautiful and original lines. I like the fifth stanza in the "Nightingale" particularly. There is a simple strength in "Columbus" which I can believe Wordsworth must have enjoyed. I have noticed your "Cain" shortly in an article in "Hog's Instructor" for June, entitled "A Bundle of Books," &c.

G. G.

Dundee, June 25th, 1856.

MY DEAR SIR,

I hoped ere this to have written a notice of your most interesting volume on 'Chamois Hunting,' and trust to accomplish it soon; meanwhile, you are welcome to my opinion of the book. I think it a most graphic and entertaining production—true to Tyrol nature—nearly as exciting as the splendid sport itself, and discovering, on the part of the author, a power almost Christopherian in dealing both with nature and with its dumb yet eloquent tenants. It is a book of minute details, and yet of general interest, and displays at once truthfulness and genius.

I am yours truly,

GEORGE GILFILLAN.

Dundee, 7th December, 1858.

DEAR SIR,

It is only a few days since I got your volume of poems, and I have nearly finished its perusal. I like many of the pieces exceedingly; but best "A Death-bed," especially the closing lines.* The "Song of Starvation," "The Verderer's Daughter,"

* These lines had been selected as the motto for the second chapter before the discovery of Mr. Gilfillan's interesting notes among Mr. Boner's papers.

"The Madonna," &c. I think highly, too, of your translations, and would suggest that a volume of specimens of modern German poets would be popular.

I saw a friendly notice by a contemporary critic, and cordially coincided with it. Dash off another prose work like the "Chamois Hunting," sprinkling it with your sweet little lyrics.

With every good wish,

I remain yours truly,

GEORGE GILFILLAN.

To Charles Boner, Esq.

At this point of our brief sketch, the two following letters will be appropriately placed. They are selected from the mass of general correspondence, not only because their respective writers bear distinguished names in literature, but also because they embody the spirit and describe the tone of Charles Boner's work accurately and felicitously.

Sunnyside, June, 1856.

MY DEAR SIR,

I received some time since your letter of April the 4th, inquiring whether a packet of books sent to me in October last had reached its destination. I am happy to inform you that I have just received it. As yet I have merely had time to

glance over your volumes, but I see at once that they are calculated to delight me. Your "Chamois Hunting," especially, will carry me into the mountains of Bavaria, which I merely skirted in the course of a tour in the autumn of 1822, but which have stamped themselves upon my memory, clothed with romantic and legendary associations.

I felt deeply gratified by the tenor of your letter, and the manner in which you express yourself concerning my writings. If they have, indeed, produced upon you the effects you mentioned, they have attained one of the highest purposes of an author.

Excuse the briefness of this letter, the object of it is merely to inform you of the receipt of your books. When I have had time to read them, I will write to you more fully. In the meantime, believe me, with great respect,

Your obliged friend,

WASHINGTON IRVING.

To Charles Boner, Esq.

Though of a later date, the following letter from Mr. Lever to Mr. Boner is inserted here, as it contains remarks on "Forest Creatures":—

Trieste, Feb. 9, 1869.

MY DEAR BONER,

I can scarcely tell you the pleasure your packet gave us all here. There is not, I assure

you, a kind expression or a kind thought of yours towards us that is not heartily returned—I won't say reciprocated—that is a rascally French word, and means insincerity.

I went deep into "Forest Creatures" last night, and it carried me along like a romance. It is wonderfully interesting, but I am glad I knew you personally before I read it, for the book has to me an additional value in reproducing the tone of a man I know and esteem. You made me laugh heartily at a bit of idiosyncrasy I could not help telling to my wife. After some details of wild boar ferocity and savagery, you say that he has some noble and *ritterlich* (knightly) qualities—so like you it was to find out a bit of good—to turn your eye to the one spark of sunlight in a dark landscape, that while I laughed I admitted the full force of the tendency.

I am greatly gratified by what you say of C.O'D (Cornelius O'Dowd), more than I will say. I'd rather believe one such testimony than a score of reviews in print; for though I feel all the flattery of your remarks I see that you appreciate so thoroughly what I tried to do, that you understand *me*, even though you over-estimate my book.

I hear from Malta that the Mediterranean Squadron are to pay us a visit here this summer, and this will surely be 'a reason fair' for seeing us again. I sincerely hope so, and I assure you that

you will be most heartily welcome, and meet none but friendly faces in the Villa Castazzi. All here join me in heartiest remembrances.

I am ever yours faithfully,

CHARLES LEVER.

END OF PART THE FIRST.

PART THE SECOND.

LETTERS OF MARY RUSSELL MITFORD, WITH NOTES BY CHARLES BONER.

In the month of August, 1845, the same year in which he visited Wordsworth at Rydal Mount, Mr. Boner made the acquaintance of Miss Mitford, whose writings he had always greatly admired. For ten years he maintained an unbroken correspondence with her, and it is to be regretted that Charles Boner's answers to Mary Russell Mitford's clever, warm-hearted epistles should either have been destroyed, or kept back from the public. Notwithstanding every effort to obtain them, they are not forthcoming, and the correspondence must for the present be left imperfect.

During the last month of his life, March, 1870, during the progress of an illness, which, though painful, had no appearance of being dangerous, Mr. Boner occupied himself in arranging and transcribing Miss Mitford's letters, intending to publish them, in a

volume, with a Memoir of the gifted writer. Had he known previously that the "Life and Letters" of his old friend were about to be given to the public, he would probably have sent his share in her correspondence to Miss Mitford's literary executor, but, owing to Charles Boner's long residence abroad, he only heard of that work after its publication.

In some of his latest letters, references will be found to these circumstances, as well as expressions of regret that ill health prevented the completion of his design. It was his often expressed intention to go over the letters again more carefully, in order that any word might be omitted which could by any possibility wound the feelings of the living, or injure the reputation of the dead.

Much care has been taken to procure such of Charles Boner's letters as have been preserved; for he seldom wrote, even to his most intimate friends, without mentioning public events, literary and scientific facts, or opinions well worth preservation. But, unfortunately, the indiscriminate destruction of letters seems to have succeeded to the fashion of hoarding much worthless commonplace. Were some discretion exercised in these matters, many letters would have been kept which throw light on interesting questions relating to politics, literature, and the fine arts. Mr. Boner's letters were eminently of this character; they would have elucidated his studies, pursuits, travels, opinions, and disposition; but, in too many cases the answer to the

inquiries made for them has been, "We never keep letters." If the publication of these Memorials of Charles Boner should induce any person possessing letters from him to wish to see them published (especially his correspondence with Miss Mitford), additions may be made to this work hereafter.

The first letter in this interesting correspondence, bears date Dec. 12, 1845.

I CANNOT thank you half enough, my dear Mr. Boner, for your most kind and charming letter, and for your good-natured recollection of my wish to possess those spirit-stirring national poems you speak of. I had just met with the "Parisienne" in an earlier edition of Casimir Delavigne's Poems, (rather odd that it should be found in a Brussels collection of 1831, and not in that of '34, is it not?) so that now my desire is gratified. I find in an account of Beranger (a most delightful one, by the by) in the "Critiques et Portraits littéraires par Saint Beuve," that he has published five volumes of Chansons, and when I go to town I shall doubtless be able to pick them out of the contents of Rolandi's library, whose catalogue with its seven supplements would be a puzzle much harder than that of the Sphinx. Thank you too, for telling me of "Les Petits Manèges d'une Femme vertueuse"—that will be by Balzac? "Les Paysans" I have seen, at least, the first volume, and I don't choose to believe it a true representation, because I do not believe that the mass of a great

nation can be so base and cunning;* though I admit that the Marquis de Custine, in his very clever work, "Le Monde comme il est," gives pretty nearly the same account of the peasantry of Normandy. But Balzac must be a cockney Parisian (if such an idiom may be allowed). The boudoir or the opera are his proper scenes, and he has no love for the people, which is not only a great fault, but a great mistake in these days, when they are rising in importance every hour. George Sand and Eugène Sue are wiser, as well as the great old Bard; and they will have their reward not only in the diffusion of their reputation, but in its duration. Even Mrs. Gore, who may be looked on as a sort of weather-cock to show which way the wind of popularity blows, has just put forth a Christmas Story, in which the scene is laid in a farm house, and the squire's son marries a clerk's daughter.

Before I forget, let me tell you that on consulting all the military authorities within reach (one of them a drill serjeant), I find them unanimous in deciding that the attitude in question corresponds to the word "Carry arms,"—it is in fact the position of a sentinel on duty. With regard to the "Sandman" we have no such personage among our nursery bugbears, and it would not be understood without an explanatory note, and even then would be a bit of foreign idiom unworthy of your truly

* What would Miss Mitford say to the French people of to-day —their utter demoralization?

English translation. The word that may be accounted synonymous amongst us as a threat to naughty children is "Old Bogie." On this point I have inquired of nurses and governesses and children themselves (a Yorkshire dame and a damsel from Cornwall were among the catechumens), and the universal response was "Old Bogie," though who the gentleman so designated may be is more than I can venture to guess. But I think you will be quite safe in putting his name in the front of your story. I look forward with great interest to the publication of that charming book, which I shall enjoy quite as much as if I were one of your legitimate readers of eight years old, instead of fifty-eight next Tuesday. Is the other translation the History of Rudolf of Hapsburg? or have I, with my customary infelicity, made a mistake in the Emperor's name? Do be so good as to tell it me, and don't be discouraged by the irksomeness of translation. You will find rendering poetry more a work of art, and therefore more self-rewarding.

I wish I had any news to send you, but I hear from town of little except the amateur play,—(Ben Jonson's "Every Man in his Humour") in which Messrs. Dickens, and Forster, of the "Examiner," and Mark Lemon and Douglas Jerrold, have been figuring. They say that Mr. Forster's "Kitely" was excellent; and one new paper, ultra-whig, is coming forth with the name of Mr. Dickens, who is to write the "Feuilletons," and the combined aid

of all the "Punch" people. It is thought a great risk.

The most important book has been Carlyle's "Cromwell," in which the mutual jargon of the biographer and his subject is very curious. Never was such English seen. The Lord Protector comes much nearer to speaking plain than his historian. I have been reading with great interest (thinking of you) Leslie's "Life of Constable;" a charming book about an admirable man. Heaven bless you! dear Mr. Boner. I wonder whether an English direction will find you. Forgive all faults, and believe me ever most faithfully yours,

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

March 23, 1846.

I WROTE you a long letter, dearest Mr. Boner, some weeks ago, which I hope you have received by this time; and now I have to thank you very heartily for another of your pretty books. "The Fir Tree," and "Red Shoes," seem to me exceedingly good, but unless these works be very profitable (which is an answer to everything), I had rather see you writing prose of your own, and laying the foundation of a solid reputation. I am quite sure there is in you the stuff of a true man of letters—a Southey, let us say—and having taken the first step under the protection of a celebrated name, I

should rejoice to find the next advance made in your own name. However, if the Danish be more profitable, that is an answer to all. As it is, I had only last week a letter from a friend of Miss Edgeworth, to say that some little nephews and nieces (not Miss E.'s) had been so enchanted with your previous stories, that they had been acting them in their house in Dublin: this is worth a thousand empty praises from grown people.

You will be sorry to hear that I, generally so active, am quite crippled by rheumatism, and hobble about like a woman of ninety. I have some hope that it is the result of this most unusual season, and that when the real spring comes (for as yet we have only the name) and brings with it the primroses and the violets, I may be able to get out and look for them. At present (this 23rd of March) we are all winter-locked together. Heaven bless you! my ever kind friend.

Ever most faithfully yours,

M. R. MITFORD.

I THANK you heartily, my dear Sir, for your very interesting letter, and shall look forward with no common expectation to a translation carefully made by one so very competent. In these days, when translating, composition, all sorts of book-work seem done as if by steam, it is something choice and rare to find poet and publisher

agreeing to recognise the virtue of slowness. Well, the trees of long growth are those of long life; the gourd of the night withers before sunset, so it will be seen with these pen-and-ink plants, be sure.

I yesterday received from Miss Barrett a very interesting letter sent to her by Miss Martineau. She will get into her cottage before April, and gives a charming account of her terrace, her field, and her quarry, whence she got the stones for her terrace wall, and which she means to hang with ivies and honeysuckles, and tuft with foxgloves and ferns. She gives also a charming account of the great Poet, although he has just lost his only brother, and had bad news from his sick daughter-in-law.

I had had an excellent account of him a few days ago from our mutual friend, Henry Crabbe Robinson (also the bosom friend of Goethe), who had been spending a month at Ambleside, to be near him. He says that his great resource is whist,—the great resource of age. Somebody comes to see him and brings two packs of cards, which last till the same somebody comes again the following year. Mr. Robinson said that Miss Martineau was much in favour, not only with Mr. Wordsworth, but with his female coterie, Mrs. Fletcher, Miss Fenwick, Mrs. Arnold, and Mrs. Wordsworth, quite a flower-garden of ladies such as Richardson used to cultivate. If I were there I should want *men* (at fifty-eight one may say so, and you will know what I mean: an infusion of manly intellect and manly spirit is

indispensable in a country life). Henry Chorley passed two days with me last week: he says that Mr. Reeve is in Paris. His little girl runs about *his* house (I mean Henry Chorley's) like a pet kitten, and is, he says, a most sweet little creature. I hope that Mr. Chorley's play will be brought out at Covent Garden by Miss Cushman, who is now, to my great horror, playing Romeo to her sister's Juliet. I don't like she-Romeos, but she has made what is called a hit, though hardly, I should think, of the best sort. How can a woman make the right sensation in doublet and hose!

Is not Hood a great serious poet? Are not the "Bridge of Sighs" and the "Haunted House" magnificent? Henry Russell has been setting and singing the "Song of the Shirt," and being a great tragic actor (in spite of the music), it is a very fine thing. I agree heartily with you about Mr. Proctor's songs. They come next to Burns's (?),* I think, and far before Moore's. You will be glad to hear that he has just got a commissionership, and is released from the drudgery of conveyancing. His wife (Basil Montague's wife's daughter) is a very pleasant person.

I am going to Paris in May, dear Mr. Boner. Can you help me to any letters of introduction; not to grand people, of course, but to such as you would like to see yourself? The man whom I should best

* The note of interrogation is inserted by Mr. Boner.

like to know is, I am afraid, not seeable—Beranger. Think of this, dear friend. A very clever and very excellent young man is to escort me, and probably a young lady, and, being artistic, he would like to know any actor or musician. I think to spend six weeks there. Miss Barrett and Mr. Kenyon say that I shall not go, which, if I wanted a motive to keep my resolution, would of course supply one. Miss Barrett is so much better that she sits up in an arm-chair, and walks across the room, although she does not leave it. Can you help her and me to any titles of French novels? Any of Balzac's or Charles de Bernard? Adieu, my dear Mr. Boner.

Ever most faithfully yours,

M. R. M.

THE enclosed, dear Mr. Boner, will prove that I had not forgotten to answer your previous kind letter. It was written to be taken by a friend who did not call for it, and then lay unseen in my desk till your two welcome notes came to recall it to mind. I now write in great haste, while a friend waits to transmit it to you, and have only time to say how very fine I think 'The Nightingale'—quite original; Wordsworth might have written it thirty years ago. Be sure that I shall be honoured to have my name in your preface.

"You will wonder to see my name on the title-page of a French book. Mr. Rolandi came to me

to select from the two hundred volumes of Alexander Dumas one volume of five hundred pages fit for ladies and families, and young people, our first customer being the Head Master of Eton, who takes one hundred copies. It has been a great trouble, and as we print at Brussels, I fear all sorts of blunders from my not seeing the proof-sheets. Pray come and see me if you visit England, and forgive this hasty scrawl. Ever, dear Mr. Boner,

Most truly yours,

M. R. M.

Three Mile Cross,
June 6, 1846.

July, 1846.

How can I ever thank you half enough, my dear Mr. Boner, for the two charming volumes which I have just received, and for the surprise, the honour, and the gratification of the prefatory address. The books are, in every sense of the word, beautiful; the illustrations worthy of the stories, and the translation best of all. The one only word that I have found to change in the next edition is "grey" as applied to the Nightingale — lowly brown is the right colour, though no doubt Mr. Andersen said "grey." Don't you remember that Thompson, always so accurate, talks of her russet robe. That story of "The Nightingale," which contains so fine an allegory, and "The Wild Swans," seem to me the most charming of the book. Is

that your own opinion? Once more accept my truest thanks.

Poor, poor Haydon! He was my old and intimate friend and correspondent for above thirty-five years. At one time he used to write to me three or four times a week, and although my occupations, and my business, and my dislike of letter-writing had much diminished that closeness of intercourse, yet the friendship continued unbroken. This event quite upset me, and I have hardly recovered it yet. I shall transcribe for you a letter on the subject from Miss Barrett, which I think you will like to see. She says,—

"The shock of Mr. Haydon's death overcame me for several days. Our correspondence had ceased a full year and a half, but in the last week he wrote several notes to me, and by his desire I have under my care boxes and pictures of his, which he brought himself to the door. Never did I anticipate this! Never did I imagine it was other than one of the passing embarrassments so unhappily frequent with him! Once before he had asked me to give shelter to things belonging to him, which, when the storm had blown over, he took back again. I did not suppose that in this storm he was to sink. Poor, noble soul! And be sure that the pecuniary embarrassment was not what sunk him. It was a mind still more lost. It was the despair of the ambition by which he lived, and without which he could not live. In the self-assertion which he had

struggled to hold up through life, he went down into death. He could not bear any longer the neglect, the disdain, the blur cast on him by the age, so he perished. The Cartoon disappointment, the grotesque antagonism of Tom Thumb, to which he recurred most bitterly in one of his last notes to me,—these things were too much for him. The dwarf slew the giant. His love of reputation, you know, was a disease with him, and for my part I believe that he died of it. That is my belief. In the last week he sent me his portrait of you among the other things; when he proposed sending it he desired me to keep it for his sake; but when it came, a note also came to say that he could not make up his mind to part with it—he would lend it to me for a while. A proof with the rest that the act was not premeditated,—a moment of madness, or a few moments of madness—who knows!"

So far our great poetess. I, knowing how doatingly fond he was of his wife and children, believe that he calculated on the sympathy that would follow the event, and that in the infinite whirl of thought preceding such a deed the notion of sacrificing himself to their interest mingled. Mrs. Haydon, from whom I heard yesterday, imputes it wholly to the conduct of a friend on whom he had relied during the last twenty years. She does not name him. However that may be, the effect will be a most comfortable provision for his wife and family.

She has a pension of £50 a year from the Queen, and one of £25 from Lady Peel. £400 was subscribed the first day at Mr. Serjeant Talfourd's (to whom, as to Elizabeth Barrett, I introduced him). The Royal Academy have given £50, the Duke of Sutherland £200, and doubtless other wealthy persons will come forward. People will remember now that he was once the most promising painter in England (when my good old friend Sir William Elford gave £700 for the "Judgment of Solomon,") and that if he did not quite keep that promise, he yet gave a great impulse and impetus to art; and that the three Landseers, Eastlake, Cope, Maclise, and Lance, were his pupils; that he first made casts of the Elgin marbles with his own hands, and that his Lectures on Art are only second to Sir Joshua's. He has left twenty-six vols. of memoirs, and wishes them printed. Doubtless, judging from his letters and conversation, they are full of piquancy and cleverness, for he lived with all the eminent men of letters of his day, and was a close and shrewd observer, and a fresh and bold writer and talker. Indeed, so full was he of life and animation, and youth of mind, that I never could join Death and Haydon in my thoughts, and that his decease, setting aside the frightful manner of it, shocked me as a discrepancy, like the death of a young bride.

Poor Haydon's wife was a most beautiful woman,

just like the Rebecca of "Ivanhoe," a Jewess born, and by her first marriage. Mr. Hymen, who appeared at the inquest, was her son, and one of the best scholars that the Reading School ever sent forth. Poor Haydon left three children, two boys, one in the navy, and one to whom Sir Robert Peel has given an appointment, and a very pleasing and pretty girl, his daughter. Sir Robert's conduct all through has been most noble,—so it was when poor Mrs. Hemans died. He sent her, in her last illness, £100 from his own purse, and an appointment for her favourite son.

Your verses are full of truth and beauty. I shall send a copy to Mrs. Haydon and to Miss Barrett. I do not apologise for this long account of a man so interesting: the subject possesses me *terribly*,—I cannot get rid of it; indeed, it seems to have made a deep impression everywhere. Mr. Home has written on it—the best thing he ever did write—which appeared in the "Daily News," but I like your stanzas better. By-the-way, the "Daily News," since the price is reduced to twopence-halfpenny, has a circulation of 23,000, beating the "Times." Advertisements will of course follow this great circulation, and will then make it a most profitable concern. I have not been to France this year, nor even to London, except to see dear Elizabeth Barrett, for a reason which I will tell you when

we meet. She is better and better; she walks to the bookseller's at the corner of the street, and drives to Hampstead and Highgate. My Dumas book is not out yet. Two other volumes of Madame D'Arblay's Memoirs are coming out, arranged by Henry Chorley. The most striking book for years is the "Life of John Foster," the great Essayist, a most noble person.

Heaven bless you! dear friend,

M. R. M.

I HAVE but a moment, dearest Mr. Boner, in which to request your acceptance of the small edition of "Belford Regis," which has just been issued. Your verses gave great pleasure to dear Mrs. Haydon, to whom I sent a copy.

Heaven bless you! dear friend.

Three Mile Cross,
Aug. 13, 1846.

September, 1846.

SOME of my friends are just going to Frankfort, and I trouble them with this letter to ask if you have received a packet from me sent about a fortnight ago and containing a new edition of "Belford Regis," the least bad I think of my prose writings. Has Balzac published anything since his "Les petits Manèges d'une Femme Vertueuse," and the

first volume of "Les Paysans;" and what is Eugene Sue about?

I had last night a visit from Mr. Pitman, of Bath, a young enthusiast, who has invented a new system of short-hand; and, above all, a new alphabet for printed words, with, of course, a new system of orthography conformable to the sound of words. He says that children learn by this new method in an incredibly short time, and means to try the system in some of the metropolitan ragged schools. In the meanwhile he has ten thousand converts and pupils, prints a journal in his new way, and is in the course of printing the Bible and the "Paradise Lost" (I wonder how many people read "Paradise Lost" now-a-days in *any* printing). Among his disciples are James Montgomery, Dr. Raffles, Simpson of Edinburgh, Mr. Bright (Cobden's friend), and Rowland Hill, of the penny postage; the three last, practical men.

I have sent him to-day to see a friend of mine, the Hon. Mrs. Fitzgerald, who a few years ago published a volume of specimens of a primeval language —the whole language, indeed, in which I remember she forgot the little words "yes" and "no"!!! Ask your friend, Count Pocci, if he remembers a certain Mrs. Farmer, the mother of Madame Klenze, of Munich. She and her younger children live in a nice house about a mile off, built by my father, where I passed the best years of my life, and which

I am glad to find in the hands of so kind a friend and so excellent a woman. Her daughter Mary showed me the other day a play-bill of an opera designed by Count Pocci, in which he figured as actor, poet, and composer, with a portrait of himself at the top as an alchymist. I was quite glad to see this, for I had felt so much admiration for his charming designs, that I wished to hear as much of him as I could. They speak of him with enthusiasm. Good by, dear friend, and happiness be with you!

M. R. MITFORD.

I HAVE to thank you, dear Mr. Boner, for your most kind letter, and for your verses, which are full of power; and now you must summon all your indulgence and all your faith in the sincerity of my esteem and my good will, and allow me to entreat you to find some better literary agent than my poor self. I live in the country, going rarely, if ever, to London, and then to one house only. I have as few literary friends and acquaintances as is well possible, and of the race of Editors and Journalists I know absolutely nothing. Then if I write to proprietors of magazines, or newspapers, or periodicals of any sort, requesting them to insert a friend's poem, the reply is sure to be that they overflow with poetry, but that they want a prose story from me, and most likely they trump up a story of some previous appli-

cation, and *dun* with as much authority as if I really owed them the article, and they had paid for it. Now all this is not only supremely disagreeable to me, but makes me a most ineffective and useless mediator for you.

You should have a man upon the spot for those things, and not an old woman at a distance, hating the trade of authorship, and keeping as much aloof as possible from all its *tracasseries*. You will understand from this, my good friend, that if I were to write a story for a book of yours, I should have half-a-dozen people claiming some imaginary promise, and clamouring, as if I had robbed them in giving away a worthless tale. As to the "Times," I am, it is true, intimate with the proprietors, but it happens that Bear Wood is the only house in England where that universal paper is never mentioned, or, if mentioned, only to be denied. So, my dear friend, you must establish, when you come to England again, some correspondence with one or other of the thousand and one literary people in London—which I am sure you can do most easily.

The great news of the season is the marriage of my beloved friend, Elizabeth Barrett to Robert Browning. Do you know him? I have seen him once only, many years ago. He is, I hear, from all quarters, a man of immense attainment and great conversational power. As a poet, I think him overrated. The few things of his which are clear, seem to me as weak as water; and those on which his reputation rests, "Paracelsus,"

and "Bells and Pomegranates," are to me as so many riddles. I dread exceedingly for her the dreadful trial of the journey across France to Italy, and the total change of life and habits. Mrs. Jameson and her niece joined them at Paris, but my last letter was from Moulins, and she then seemed much exhausted. God grant she be not quite worn out by that terrible journey to Pisa! The prettiest account of a love-match for a long while is to be found in the sixth volume of "Madame D'Arblay's Memoirs," excellently arranged by my friend Henry Chorley. It is charming to see the account of their cottage life—she working for him in England, he for her in France. I have also been much amused by the "Coq du Clocher," by the author who calls himself Jerome Paturot. Do you know anything about him? He is immensely clever, and very entertaining.

Tell me anything about French literature—I know little of German, and, to say the truth, take small interest in it, though Count Pocci interests me much from his universality of talent. Good by, my dear Mr. Boner. Don't be angry with me, but believe me ever very faithfully yours.

M. R. MITFORD.

February, 1847.

I sit down with *malice prepense*, dear Mr. Boner, to pay in quantity though not in quality

your most amiable letter; prompted thereto not merely by my strong desire to chat with a friend whom I very greatly value and admire, but by my anxiety to hear that he is quite recovered. We have had a most trying winter. I never have lost so many old friends. Indeed, the aged and the infirm have almost universally dropped from the tree.

I at Miss Barrett's wedding! Ah, dearest Mr. Boner, it was a runaway match: never was I so much astonished. He prevailed on her to meet him at church, with only the two necessary witnesses. They went by railway to Southampton, crossed to Havre, up the Seine to Rouen, to Paris by railway. There they stayed a week. Happening to meet with Mrs. Jameson, she joined them in their journey to Pisa; and accordingly they travelled by diligence, by railway, by Rhone boat—any how—to Marseilles, thence took shipping to Leghorn, and then settled themselves at Pisa for six months. She says that she is very happy. God grant it continue! I felt just exactly as if I had heard that Dr. Chambers had given her over when I got the letter announcing her marriage, and found that she was about to cross to France. I never had an idea of her reaching Pisa alive. She took her own maid and her Plush.

I saw Mr. Browning once. Many of his friends and mine, William Harness, John Kenyon, and Henry Chorley, speak very highly of him. I sup-

pose he is an accomplished man, and if he makes his angelic wife happy, I shall of course learn to like him.

Thank you very much for your information as to French books. The last that I read of Balzac's was "Une Instruction Criminelle," which finishes the tragical history of poor Lucien de Rubempré, begun in "Les Illusions Perdues," and continued with admirable power in "Un grand Homme de Province à Paris." He is a wonderful writer. Yes, I know the works of both the Comtes de Maistre, the great Catholic writer, and his brother who wrote the "Voyage autour de ma Chambre." It is very graceful. But the writer of that day that I like best is Paul Louis Courier, and I think that since writing to you I have read all Beaumarchais. I mean the four volumes of 'Memoires,' which are really as clever as 'Figaro,' and which I earnestly recommend to you. They are pamphlets published on occasion of different lawsuits, and which kept all Paris in a roar. He was certainly one of the most remarkable men in the world. "Picciola" is very pretty—just that. We have no books of much account here. Did I tell you of the "Life and Letters of John Foster?" That is really good and great. Two new vols., the sixth and seventh of Madame D'Arblay's "Memoirs," Heneage Jesse's "Memoirs of the Pretenders," Edward Jesse's "Book of Dogs," and Smith's "Streets of London," are about the best of them.

Mr. Walter's ("Times") health is failing, and the

paper will have to combat the success of the "Daily News," which Mr. Dilke ("Athenæum") is bringing out at half price. The "Times" has also changed its editor, Mr. Delane having left it, and (I believe) young John Walter taken to the post. These are great secrets, but I believe I am right.

This, I think, is the principal news. Everybody speaks well of your pretty books, and I trust that your publisher has cause to be of the same opinion. I shall be delighted to see the new volume. My neighbours, the Farmers, are going to Germany, so that they will see Count Pocci, of whom they speak so well. They are excellent people, but I do not see much of them, as sometimes, you know, happens. Do you know Mr. Ruskin, the Oxford graduate, whose letters on art are so striking? He is a most charming person, and I thought of you often when he was here last week. You would suit each other.

Thank you a thousand times for all your goodness to me, especially for forgiving my being so bad a correspondent. I shall mend. An old relative of my father's—the only relation with whom I do correspond, and, indeed, almost my only relation as cousinship counts in the South, writes to me and I to her about three times in two years, each loving the other very heartily; so I suppose it runs in the blood. At all events, I do very sincerely admire and regard you, my dear friend, and I trust

we shall meet this year at my poor house. Ever most faithfully and gratefully yours.

M. R. MITFORD.

June, 1847.

THANK you a thousand and a thousand times, dearest Mr. Boner, for all your kindness, especially this fresh one of the list of French books. The Memoirs, Biographies and Portraits are particularly welcome, French Memoirs being my favourite reading. For I assure you and Madame de Bonstetten, dear friend, that I have read long ago something between sixty and eighty works of that sort of the old times, from the "Memoires de Sully" downward: and, only this year, read over again those of the Cardinal de Retz and of Mademoiselle de Montpensier. Tell her this, or she will think me a fanatic for "le genre romantique."

Have you yourself or has she read the lyrics of Victor Hugo? "Les Feuilles d'Automne," "Les Chants du Crepuscule," "Les Orientales" and "Les Rayons et Ombres." These and Beranger's "Chansons" and the best of Charles de Bernard, of George Sand and Balzac seem to me the finest things, together with some of Lamennais, Edgar Quinet, Michelet, Thiers, and Thierry of the new school. But Paul Courier is perhaps greater than all, and I suppose Madame de Bonstetten will admire and like them all.

I have got the whole of Gerald Griffin's poetry, and swear by him at present, as well as by most of his prose. Did you or did you not like Mr. Bennett? He went back with me from Whiteknights and stayed talking till half-past twelve, both forgetting how late it was. I wished for you, when you would have seen a fine mind thrown open, and shown him one quite as fine, adorned with the grace of manner which he wants. But I always wish for you when there is anything worth enjoying, and that, dear friend, is the measure of my opinion of you, as well as of my regard and affection. Some day or other I do hope we shall see more of each other—Shall we not? This very evening my neighbours from Bearwood are coming and Mr. Willmot, a most accomplished and admirable clergyman, author of a fine life of Jeremy Taylor, and of the Lives of the Sacred Poets; one in whose charming conversation, and sweetness and purity of nature, one forgets the talent—so much is character above mere intellect.

I wrote to Mr. Langford, the manager at Blackwood's London house, about you the very day after you went away. He is not professedly at all connected with the magazine, but is a literary man and so clever that his good word would tell. Do call on him in Paternoster Row. You are sure to like each other.

Say everything for me to Mr. Hymen, and believe me yours most affectionately.

M. R. MITFORD.

I had a letter to-day from a sister of Charles Buller's, about your books. She calls you Andersen's *only* translator. What you say of him is charming. I am so glad that he has fallen into your hands. Have you seen my friend, Mrs. Arthur Clive's (V.)* poem, "The Queen's Ball?" The subject is very striking—one hundred and fifty persons had been invited who are dead. I suppose they copied the last year's list.

July 2, 1847.

I DON'T think, my dear Mr. Boner, that you ever got a very long, very affectionate and very true letter, which a most charming one of yours prompted, and which I sent by the post from Reading to Ratisbon.

You can hear of Mrs. Haydon at Mr. Sergeant Talfourd's. I have not heard from her for a long time; it being of course my sin, as you would well imagine.

I need not tell you how glad I shall be to see you, but you will be sorry to find me exceedingly lame—lame ever since my rheumatism four months ago. I now take three hours for walking the dis-

* Authoress of "Poems by V."

tance that I used to accomplish in one; and this hot weather renders exercise so fatiguing to me, that it is a misery to me to get about until the very last thing at night. If I had money to keep a little pony chaise, it would of course much lessen the inconvenience, but that is not likely to happen, for I have not sufficient and am never likely to have more. As it is, this affliction prevents my visiting London this season as I had intended; my recovery depending, I am told, on the effect of warm weather and abstaining from fatigue.

Mrs. Wordsworth will feel her daughter's death more than her husband. Miss Martineau was with him when the death of his brother was announced; he cried at first, but within two hours was quite in his usual spirits. Heaven bless you!

August 9, 1847.

I DO not know, dear Mr. Boner, when I have been more heartily provoked by anything than by our old enemy, the Great Western, which did not bring your most kind packet of autographs till you were fairly on your way to the Continent, so that my sincere and earnest thanks have to follow you all the way to Ratisbon. Most heartily do I thank you, dear friend, and so do those who are almost as much obliged as myself; for, after all, you have done most for me, as you intended, by enabling

me to give so much pleasure to those who are so kind to me.

I was delighted to find Andersen writing such excellent English; among other reasons because he will, I think, be capable of estimating the vast difference between his translator and his translatress, if one may so speak of the Danish-English doer-into of the German* version of the books, for such it is said, Mrs. Howitt is. I wrote the other day to Miss Skerrett ("the Queen's Miss Skerrett," who has so much to do in recommending books all through the palace; and who, herself a great Danish scholar, would be a good judge of the beauty of your versions), begging if the Danish stories were not in the royal nursery that she would place them there, which she says she will do. She tells me that, in addition to her multifarious occupations, she has been much tormented this year by the necessity of officiating as interpreter between a German maid and a French maid, belonging to the Queen, neither of whom knows a word of any language but her own. As Miss Skerrett is not going into Scotland with Her Majesty, the poor foreigners must get on how they can. She tells me that she saw Mrs. Trollope this spring, and thought her much aged; grown thin and changed in no common degree. Mrs. Trollope was going to

* Mrs. Howitt translated Andersen's "Improvisatore," considered to be extremely well rendered from the original Danish. —EDITOR.

Venice, to be there at the same time with some learned people,—some association or other.

Before I forget it, let me tell you that the name of the heroine of Wordsworth's fine classical poem is Laodamia. I think it was with you that I was speaking of that poem. Alfred Tennyson's new poem is a Commonwealth of *Women*—a man gains admission, and you can imagine the result! It is said to be good. William Harness told me that he met one day, at dinner, the Heroine of Locksley Hall and her husband, and he thought the lady had chosen wisely.

Poor Mr. Walter died without a sigh. His son is in for Nottingham; Fox and George Thomson in —Bulwer, Hobhouse, and Roebuck out. I am sorry for Roebuck.

By the way, the new M.P. for Oxford (city) is my friend, William Wood, a great whig lawyer, and a man of splendid talent and admirable character, son of Sir Mathew, and known to all the ministers, so that there is a Solicitor-General found. Mr. Harness and Mr. Dyce have been spending a day here, and my literary news comes from them. Moore, although so entirely failing in intellect that he repeats the same question a dozen times, yet wrote the other day to offer twelve volumes of anecdotes and diary. They will of course be very interesting.*

* Afterwards published, edited by Lord John Russell, now Earl Russell.—EDITOR.

I wrote the other day to Mrs. Browning's sister to ask her address, lamenting the long time that had intervened without my hearing from her, and she wrote me word that she had just had a similar letter from her, so a letter has been lost one way or the other.

Oct. 11, 1847.

NEVER doubt for an instant, dearest Mr. Boner, the vivid sympathy with which your feelings and occupations never fail to inspire me. I remember, myself, the strong admiration with which I read Dr. Arnold's Life and Letters, and that best and greatest of his works, the "Lectures on History." One of his correspondents (the Rev. Mr. Blackstone) is a friend and neighbour of mine, and you shall see him (D.V.) the first time I have the happiness of receiving you here. He has the living of Heckfield, succeeding immediately to Mrs. Trollope's father, and inhabiting the pretty grounds and vicarage-house where the celebrated authoress was *raised*. He is also a clever man, but too bigoted a churchman for my taste, and I always wondered how Dr. Arnold and he got on together: he is, besides, a grandson of the Judge. The last that I heard of poor Dr Arnold's family was from a dear friend (John Kenyon) who was visiting Mr. Wordsworth, and he said that he met Mrs. Arnold and her children crossing a field by a country pathway in their deep mourning, and that it impressed him like a village

funeral. I don't know whether this expression strikes you, but to me it seemed at once a poem and a picture.

Did you read the "Life and Letters of John Foster," the Essayist and Dissenting Minister? I think that they struck me even more than the "Memoirs of Dr. Arnold," as belonging to a man, equally pious, but even more strikingly a thinker, and of independence of character and conduct, and individuality the most marked and decided of any man of our day. He not only followed and courted no one, but he suffered nobody to court or follow him, and the contrast of his rigid economy, and his love of books and prints, his scornful resistance to editors and employers, and his delightful humility to his friend and rival, Robert Hall, above all those charming letters to his obscure old widowed landladies, seemed to me more worthy of admiration than anything I have met with for a very long time. Both books have the great merit of biography, that of causing you quite to forget the biographer, and I think you would admit that the two men are worthy compeers both in character and in genius.

I should also like you to read the "Life and Letters of Gerald Griffin," equally interesting in a different way. The story resembles that of Crabbe (you know, of course, the charming life of the poet by his son) with much higher independence of character. You shall read it when we meet, for I have

got it, as well as his poems, two very choice volumes, and as 'The Collegians' is also announced for the Parlour Library, I hope also to have *that*. He was a most remarkable writer, dying at thirty-six a monk in an Irish monastery.

Lamartine's book is very striking indeed: all the people at the palace, Lady Lyttleton, the sub-governess, Miss Skerrett, the Queen herself, who reads so little, have been devouring it. Her Majesty had also written to Miss Skerrett from Scotland desiring her to procure Andersen's Memoirs in German. I have sent your translations, with the Irish poems and Motherwell, to the Palace this very week; so that I am sure yours will be the first English translation of Andersen that Her Majesty and the governesses will see, and I have no doubt but it will be followed by the purchase of the volumes. I wrote —— all about you, dear friend, if the Queen should be curious.

Lamartine is very striking and very interesting, and I did not think that it was in him to write so great a book. He does injustice, crying injustice, to Napoleon, and is so much too candid towards most of the Revolutionary leaders, that reading of so many crimes and so many excuses for all parties, one is tempted to ask, who is to blame? Nevertheless it is a very great book.

I am now reading Appert's "Dix Ans à la Cour de Louis Philippe," and am much amused by it. How was he ruined? and what was he about in Prussia?

Tell me what you know of him, for one cannot help being interested for him, and one likes him for his way of talking of Napoleon, and Beranger, and Casimir Delavigne, and Arnault. What a shame to let him (Arnault) die in poverty and misery! I have no faith in courts or princes, and doubt if one branch of the Bourbons be much better than the other.

Did you read, in Jerrold's Magazine, Mrs. Acton Tindal's beautiful ballads? She is a dear friend of mine, and last week brought her husband to see me. They spent four days at the "Bear" in Reading, travelling from Aylesbury with their own horses, so that they were backward and forward here every day. I never saw a handsomer or a happier couple —both elegant, gracious and full of gaiety and sensibility; he is a fine athletic dark man of thirty-one or thirty-two, she a most sweet and lovely blonde of twenty-three or twenty-four. She had £25,000 down, and will have much more, and he is only clerk of the peace for Buckinghamshire and partner of his father, a very rich solicitor of Aylesbury, so she might have done much better in a worldly point of view. But he is very well connected (nephew of the late chief justice) and of the highest character; altogether I have never seen two people so happy and so deserving of happiness. I think she will attain a great popularity. Her poems have force and finish of no common order, resembling the best and most picturesque of Mrs. Hemans,

without imitation, and with youth and healthiness. I should like to make you acquainted, and some day or other I hope to do so. Her poems are chiefly ballads on very graphic and interesting historical subjects, and there is a vein of devotional poetry, very fine because very *true*. Mr. D'Israeli was staying at their house for his election. His clinging to his own people is curious. His old constituents at Shrewsbury desired him to send down a candidate, and he did send the master of an old curiosity shop, a rich Jew broker, whom they have elected together with my friend Mr. ——. My maid says that fifteen years ago, when standing for High Wycombe, he had one hundred Jew boys from London to carry his flags.

I am so lame still that I am compelled to get a pony chaise. God grant it do not send me to the Queen's Bench! Next year you shall drive me about in it, will you? Is not this a long letter? Now you must write me one still longer, and send me a very plain, proper direction, and tell me what French books to read. Is Eugene Sue writing anything since "Martin?" Or Balzac? or George Sand? or Victor Hugo? or Charles de Bernard? I read a clever imitation of Gerfaut, lately, "Le Chien d'Alcibiade." Mrs. Browning says there are no new French books to be had at Florence. They are to winter at Rome.

God bless you! my dear friend.

They have made me an honorary member of the

Whittington Club, in company with Joanna Baillie, Maria Edgeworth, Mrs. Somerville, and Leigh Hunt, —only these five. This is a very great compliment.

Three Mile Cross,
December 16, 1847.

I WRITE to you on my birthday, dearest Mr. Boner, the day that seems to gather one nearer to those whom one loves and values; and I send you all the good wishes that I know you would pour forth on your poor old friend on this her sixtieth birthday, if you did but know it. I hope and trust that you are better in Germany than we are in England. Influenza is in every house quite as a pestilence; illness of every sort besides. For my own part I have been suffering all the autumn. But besides this, I have had a great affliction in the death of my dear old dog. You remember him, I am sure, with his bright auburn curls, dark and shining as the rind of the horse-chestnut, and the golden light that played over them in the sunbeams! I am sure you remember my poor pretty favourite. But nothing but my long experience of his high qualities can convey a notion of his real value; his sweetness, his gentleness, his affection, his over-estimate of kindness, his forgetfulness of wrong, his recollection of old friends, old servants, were most remarkable.

At the end of three years he suddenly recog-

nised a friend of mine who had been good to him, jumped upon her, and even licked her hands and feet. He never forgot anyone who had been kind to him. I cannot tell you how I miss him, and his sagacity was such as to make him really a companion; his sagacity and his sympathy,—for that, I suppose, was the real charm after all,—the loving where I loved. If you remember, he recognised you last year. The only alleviation to our loss is, that he died without pain, and without any of the infirmities of age, which if he had lived much longer he would, I fear, have suffered, for he was thirteen or fourteen years old.

I have been thinking of you and talking of you lately, having been engaged (as indeed I still am) in making out a list of secular books for lending libraries for the poor. The young wife of a clergyman, a girl of sense, wrote to me to say she could find no such list except of tracts and sermons! so dear Mr. Lovejoy and I have fallen to work, and when we have completed our labour we shall send you a copy. We mean to set down the very best books (which are luckily the cheapest), upon the plan of Napoleon, who you remember in throwing open the theatres of Paris after a victory or a marriage, always chose a play of Corneille, or of Molière, and always found his choice justified by the gratification and intelligence of the audience.

Just as we were thinking of this subject William Chambers, of Edinburgh, came to pay me a

visit, and has assisted us by a good deal of information and advice, such as getting parishes to agree and interchange their libraries. He says that the obstacles to all education in England and Scotland, are the clergy. I am quite of that mind from my own experience, but I did not expect to hear him say so. He is a very superior person. He has persuaded Miss Edgeworth to write a book for young people,—remarkable considering her age, for she must be turned of eighty, but still one that justifies my theory of not writing too long, inasmuch as it reads just like an imitation of her own better works. It is called "Orlandino," and is a story of a lad reformed from drinking by a younger lad.

Alfred Tennyson's poem, "The Princess, A Medley," is at last announced to be published in a few days: I am very anxious to see it. Thank you for your list, dear friend. I mean your French list. I am now reading M. de Baranté's great book on the Dukes of Burgundy. Very captivating historians, are these modern French writers, full of picture and colour, interesting you in the story of the country they write about, but whether (I am especially thinking of Lamartine now) they may give a very correct idea of the people, is doubtful. Lamartine has a wonderful tendency to make his people better, so that one wonders (the crimes having certainly been committed) who, according to him, was to blame.

Is Eugene Sue writing now? I have seen

nothing of his since "Martin," and one cannot afford to lose the creator of Rigolette. Your books are still at Windsor Castle; Miss Skerrett—herself an excellent Danish as well as German scholar—praises the translation greatly. Messrs. Grant and Griffith have just sent me your new volume of "Andersen." Thank you for it. Heaven bless you, my dear friend.

Feb. 28th, 1848.

I HOPE, dearest friend, that you have before now got a long letter which I wrote and kept in the house, waiting myself to go into Reading, and at last sent off somewhat suddenly. At all events I am sure you would not doubt the reality of my friendship and affection. I am no very punctual correspondent, but I am a very constant person in my attachments, and you cannot get quit of my regard for you if you were to try. For the rest I did not answer your last note until now, because I had nothing to say that would have given you pleasure. This has been the most unhealthy winter that I ever remember—wet, damp, showery, vapoury, thoroughly trying. Accordingly I have paid the common penalty, and been miserably ill of the sort of low fever which has been called influenza. I am now recovering, but it weakens people bodily and affects the spirits, strength, and appetite, more than can be imagined. However, so many old friends have died

that I suppose I am fortunate to have weathered the storm.

Last week arrived the pretty volume called "Charles Boner's Book." Thank you much for it. I like best the "Toe and Finger" story. But I want to suggest to you for next year what I am sure you would do well and what would I think please. You live among children abroad—write a journal (true or false as you like, when the writer is a real artist the false is the true) of the sayings and doings of children abroad, putting as little or as much of story as you like. You will see that this will have much that is new and piquant, will admit of almost any poem or tale that you may wish to introduce, whether of your own or of Andersen's, avoiding any collision with other translators, and preserving a sort of oneness which books of detached pieces want. Think of this. I foresee that the Andersen and Fairy Tale fashion will not last; none of these things away from general nature do. There is, after all, a sameness and a poverty in all that does not belong to our common kind which never really sustains itself. Two or three of Andersen's stories, such as "The Ugly Duck" (in spite of its hideous title), will last for ever, like Undine, but as a class they will soon go down, sooner in our country than anywhere else.

Forgive this frank expression of opinion, dearest friend. I would not take such a liberty except in writing to one whom I esteem so much. Try what

you can do with scenery and character and manners as you see them. Descriptions, for instance, of an artist's studio at Munich,—the thousand things to which intelligent children would be taken in Germany,—would afford better material for a child's book than all the fairy tales that ever were devised. I had a talk over the matter with Mr. Griffith, who agreed with me that Andersen would certainly not last as a child's classic. He mixes* a satire which is neither within their comprehension nor desirable if it were.† Try to deal with real scenery

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* [Some words are omitted here evidently.—C. B.]

† The following letter from Andersen will be read with interest :—

DEAR KIND FRIEND,

I should have written sooner but I could not. Never before have I been so overwhelmed as in England and Scotland—it was too much. Such love and friendship, such over-estimation as I have met with make me giddy when I think of them. You know how I was seized upon—I still sigh for rest. My hearty reception in Scotland moved me almost to tears, my writings were so well known, I found so many friends, that I could scarcely believe such good fortune. I must give you an instance. In Edinburgh I went with a party to visit Heriot's Hospital for Orphans. When we had written our names in the stranger's book, the porter read the list, and asked if 'Andersen' was the author, and when answered "yes," the old man clasped his hands, and gazing with delight on an old gentleman, exclaimed, "Yes, just so have I pictured him to myself—those honourable white hairs, that mild countenance—*that* is Andersen !" When told that I was the man, "That young gentleman !" he cried, "why, generally, when one hears of such great people, they are either dead or very old." When this story was repeated to me, I at first thought it a jest, but the porter came to me

and human affections. At all events think of this.

Are you coming to London this year? Let me know as soon as you know yourself, because I should like to go to a French play with you. I have an old friend coming to lodge in the village for a month who has spent the last twenty years in France with her husband, she having been goose enough to marry a Frenchman much younger than herself. They are now parted after years of misery and a great sacrifice of income. I had thought of going to her, to Paris and Fontainbleau, this next autumn and winter, but what will come of this revolution God knows. One is lucky not to be there now. You have been having the same sort of affair in a smaller way. Tell me anything you know of the Parisian doings.

Lamartine's has been a curious career. Who after watching his rise as a sort of sacred poet (I always detected the mixture of cant and finery in

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quite agitated, and told me how he and all the boys lived in my stories, till he almost brought tears into my eyes.

After some other details of kindness received from Prince Albert, Charles Dickens, and others, Andersen says:

And now I must go home; I have an impulse, a constraint upon me to accomplish *something*. All that I have hitherto done is weak and childish. God give me power! Remain ever my friend. I love you truly and from my heart. And now farewell, dear friend.

Yours for ever,

H. C. ANDERSEN.

his verses), and then as a sort of Exeter Hall speaker, would have expected him to come forth either with a revolutionary book (for an apology for the heroes of the Revolution it is) or as a revolutionary hero? Do you know much of Louis Blanc? I hope some of them are sincere, but really one doubts.

I have not heard from Mrs. Browning for three or four months.

We have a very clever novel called "Jane Eyre," by a new writer. He calls himself Currer Bell, but one does not know whether that be his real name. God bless you, my dear friend.

After all, Lamartine is a remarkable man; to write so well and to speak so well is something rare.

April, 1848.

TEN thousand thanks for your kind and interesting letter. I still think that a well executed natural cheerful children's journal in Germany would sell, or a set of stories on German History, like the "Tales of a Grandfather," and the same thing from French History (if not done before), would be charming. Think of these things, and attend to the idiom. A great admirer of yours, a very pretty young friend of mine, showed me the other day that you had two or three times called a bird, clearly the

mother of the family, *he*. Do you think in English? That looks as if you did not. If ever people get to read thoughtful poetry I think that yours will do you honour, but I doubt if ever they will. You may rely upon it that very few people read Wordsworth, although it is the fashion to praise him.

The last thing I read of Andersen's was his "Autobiography," and between the vanity of the writer, and the baldness and poverty of the translation, I was completely disgusted. I did not think it possible to so entirely do away with the interest of the rise of a poor boy into intellectual eminence. But he has no sympathy with his own order—he is essentially a toad-eater, a hanger-on in great houses, like the led captains of former days, a man who values his acquaintances for their rank and their riches and their importance in the world; not one who, like you, fills with honour and independence the most honourable and useful part in a great family, but one who uses fame merely as a key to open drawing-room doors, a ladder to climb to high places. Of all living writers the one most free from this fault is Beranger, and at his feet one could cast oneself in admiration. But I doubt Andersen, and in a different way (for the sin and weakness of ambition) I doubt Lamartine. I have been hearing a great deal of him lately from an English lady who has lived twenty years in France and is just returned here. She was intimate with his wife, and speaks of him as a man of very distinguished appearance,

but cold and almost repulsive manners. He carries out his fancies so far as to have two servants who had been condemned to death. If for political offences that is well, but I should hardly sympathise with murderers for butlers and footmen— would you? She, my neighbour, was also intimate with Arago and Cavagnac; and M——, the editor of the "National," used to act with her in plays of her own writing, when professor of history at a provincial school. Truly this is the age of the Press!

Mind and let me know if you do come to England. The weather here is abominable. We have not had two fine days for the last two months, which prevents my gaining strength.

Heaven bless you! dear friend. I think of you often and always with the most affectionate interest.

Yours,
MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

Three Mile Cross,
May 9, 1848.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I begin answering your affectionate and charming letter the moment I receive it. I wish you were here to drive me again where I spent yesterday,— to the woods of Silchester; weather such as you describe, villages smiling, with

gardens and orchards in flower, horse-chestnuts standing out with great wild cherry trees, from the beech and oak woods; and under one's feet wood-sorrel, wood-anemone, wild hyacinth, Solomon's seal, and lily of the valley.

Nevertheless, so nervous and poorly am I still, that the good done me by the air, and the loveliness of the scenery, was almost counterbalanced by the shying of the pony as I came home, although I was driven by a steady old coachman; but you would have been a companion and a friend, as well as a good driver, and we should have talked of too many things to have allowed me time to be frightened. I don't know if I have written to you since I had that providential escape from a vicious pony, who kicked two carriages to pieces the same afternoon; in the first of which I was saved only by the courage of my brave and faithful little maid: so that the fear is not quite unnatural, when combined with great physical weakness, for I am still very poorly. However, we must hope.

Everything in nature here is most lovely; I never saw so much blossom, or heard so many nightingales, and I have longed for you to listen by my side to two in our own garden, which answer one another all night long. Now let me tell you that I am hopeful the papers are mistaken about Mr. Wordsworth. I have asked of many persons who ought to know, but they all say they know

nothing, but I had the other day a letter from Keswick, from his and my friend John Ruskin, who mentions him incidentally, without a hint as to the "mental imbecility," that has gone the round of the press. He says,—"Even Wordsworth does not understand Switzerland." I am sure Mr. Wordsworth might retort and say,—"John Ruskin does not understand Cumberland Lakes, for he calls them vile bits of woodland and pools of dirty water;" but then the charming Oxford Graduate is in a passion. These revolutions have stopped his travels, and put him out of sorts. Tell your charming princess how flattering is the interest she feels in me, and how earnest and sincere are my good wishes for her health and happiness.

Tell me of your sister. I envy any one who has born friends. I was always an only child, and always longed for a brother, and now I have only a few distant relations,—most of them too grand to claim. One whom I saw the other day, after thirty years' absence (a niece of the late Duke of Athole, and my second cousin), seemed a pleasant, frank, open-countenanced person, and probably poorer than myself. Yet I felt all the time I was talking to my fair visitor, how very little we had in common, and how wise had been the rule which had withheld me from making or even meeting the advances of far greater people—the Bedfords, Greys, &c., to whom I am very remotely, but still lineally, allied, and who have the reputation of great kind-

ness. Perhaps this is more truly pride than poor dear Andersen's, but it is at all events much safer.

Does not France seem in a more hopeful condition? I think so. The people have behaved so well. There has been little bloodshed and no irreverence.* God grant the end may be for the peaceful happiness of all nations! Here there is so strong a manifestation in favour of an enlarged franchise, that it must, I think, take place. The *Times* says so, and you know they generally know which way the wind sets. I myself should like an educational test, but it will probably end in household suffrage and the ballot.

In Ireland the sufferings are terrible. The worst cases are wisely kept out of the papers, but a most enlightened friend of mine just returned thence, says that they have been driven into such a strait by famine, as men in a boat at sea; that parents have been found over a pot where their own child was the food, and that a relation of his own, an assistant barrister, tried two boys for putting† their younger sisters in a bog-hole, to seize themselves on the little portion of meal doled out to them!! Fancy such facts as these in a Christian land! Nobody seems to see a remedy. The real one would be for all great proprietors, whig, tory, or radical, to lay aside politics, to live upon their estates, cul-

* How sad to think of France in 1871, compared with Miss Mitford's picture.—EDITOR.

† This statement has since been authoritatively denied.—EDITOR.

tivate the waste lands, and educate these poor misguided people into faith in their fellows.

Yes, your critic is a pretty little girl, and a very clever one; full of prejudice as an egg is full of meat, but racy, original, and ambitious. She is at present working hard at the classics, and very angry with me for meeting her raptures about Cicero with bits of "Les Mystères de Rome," which I happen to be reading. I have no love for the Romans; the Greeks, if you will, were a great people.

We have two very beautiful books,—"The Female Poets," by Mrs. Frederick Rowton, a most charming volume. The most large and generous criticism, and the best selection, that I have ever seen. It is superbly got up, too, and will be a standard work. The other is Forster's (of the *Examiner*) "Life of Goldsmith," which, if it were not one third too long, would be charming. What is curious is, that over and over again the biographer praises his hero for the absence of superfluous phrases. Then we have a very striking volume,—"The Autobiography of a Working Man" (Alexander Somerville, the soldier who was flogged), as graphic as Defoe, and a very safe and sound politician. Also I have read (at your recommendation) George Sand's "François le Champi." It is charming. *She* is at present the fashionable foreign writer in England.

"Heaven bless you! my very dear friend. I

think of you very often, as often I think as I see or hear anything that you would enjoy, and always with affectionate gratitude. It is so good in such a one as you to care for an old woman like me.

Ever most faithfully yours,
M. R. MITFORD.

I meant to have gone to London this spring, but I have not strength for the journey. You would hardly believe how feeble I am become, and how soon tired by exercise and conversation.

Three Mile Cross,
August 25th, 1848.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I do not know when any letter has given me so much pain and so much pleasure as the one I have just received from you. The pain, because you have been so ill, the pleasure from a thousand causes — gladness that you are recovering, delight in your kindness—and pride, an aunt-like, almost mother-like pride, in yourself. I am quite without near relatives, and make my dearest and choicest friends serve instead as resting-places to my affections; and you and the sister whom you love so well must pardon me for claiming you amongst those whom my judgment and my affection combine to place very, very near the head of the list. Thank

you for all that you tell me of that dear sister. I have long remarked that amongst the most ripening and most improving of womanly tendernesses is that of an elder sister, especially when the object to be cared for is a brother, and all that you tell me of Miss Boner is so admirable, and falls in so well with the theory founded on previous observation, that I seem to know her almost as well as I know you. If it please God to spare me a few years, I hope that I shall know her personally, for surely when you return to England she will not remain abroad, and then I do hope she will come with you to my poor cottage. If she do not, I shall ask you to take me to see her. Tell her this, and tell her I am determined to win a little bit of her heart if only by our mutual appreciation of you. *That* must be my claim to her regard. I feel assured that I could not have a stronger.

Thank you for your most kind inquiries after my health. It continues bad. About a month ago I betook myself to Taplow, close to Maidenhead, from which lovely spot I am just returned. Do you know it? I had the pleasantest lodging possible, in a cottage close to the Thames. My rooms opened into a garden full of trees and flowers, which stretched down to the river. We had even our own little terrace, and landing-place, and stairs to the river. Just below us the fine old bridge, and above the magnificent woods of Cliefden. There cannot be a prettier spot. The Thames was all

alive with gay pleasure-boats, barges, and graceful processions of swans with their young cygnets. A friend from London, a young man of great talent and still greater kindness, came to meet me there. He lodged at an inn in the town, and came every day at one or two o'clock to drive me to different places.

We went to Dropmore, the beautiful gardens created by Lord Granville; to Ockwells, a most curious and beautiful house of Henry the Sixth's day; to Lady Place, in the vaults of which the Whig lords concerted the Revolution of 1688,—I went into the recess where the famous letter to the Prince of Orange was written and signed; to Cliefden—'Cliefden's proud alcove,'—where, although the house is new, the terrace remains just as it was when the Countess of Shrewsbury held her lover's horse while he fought and slew her husband:—to Beaconsfield, to trace all that the fire has spared of Burke's house: the foundation, the well, some outer walls, the stables, and the grove in which he was accustomed to walk.

N.B.—I affronted the people at Beaconsfield by not going on pilgrimage to Waller's house (I saw his monument in the churchyard when I went to the church to see Burke's), but I worship no false gods, and we know that if he were alive now he would not get into a magazine; and he lived in the great age of lyric poetry, the age of Ben Jonson, of Beaumont and of Fletcher, of Wither, of Crashaw,

of Herrick, of Lovelace, of Montrose, of Suckling, of Milton, of Dryden.

Then I visited the stalwart yeoman, who at eight months old served as the model of Sir Joshua's "Infant Hercules." He is as fine and Herculean an Englishman now as ever one beheld. I cannot help telling you that there, in that old-fashioned Buckinghamshire farm-house, I found a print of my own cottage. To Chalfont, St. Giles, where the house to which Milton retired from the plague, remains almost, I should think, as the great poet left it. To Stoke Pogis and Upton Church to visit the haunts and home and grave of Gray—two parties were there on the same errand—I mean at Stoke—one copying the unrivalled epitaph written by him, the other sketching the quaint old church. Twice to Windsor, once for the castle and chapel, which I had often seen, once to Herne's oak, a ghost of a tree, which I had never seen before; and three times to Burnham Beeches, for their own matchless beauty. They fully deserve their reputation. Fancy six hundred acres of ground finely diversified by dells and declivities, now consisting of the finest turf, now clothed with splendid fern, holly and juniper bushes, and over all scattered those gigantic pollards, mostly hollow, but crowned with such masses of verdure, that nothing but seeing them could make one believe that such mere shells could support such luxuriant vegetation; and then their size, and the masses in which their roots

wreathe themselves above the turf to the distance of many yards. They are marvellous.

The Grotes have a country house close by, a small, unostentatious house, that does honour to the simple habits and refined taste of that elegant scholar and excellent man. Mrs. Grote erected a monument to Mendelssohn, a tombstone—a headstone—in the middle of a place worn bare by picknickers, whither, as appears from some stanzas of her inditing, the great composer accompanied her. The verses are not bad, but the whole has the oddest effect possible. Besides doing all this, I used to go every evening into the Taplow woods by the river, or sometimes on the river, and enjoyed all this beauty very much.

But I can hardly say that I am much better for the journey. Moreover, my dear faithful little maid caught cold on our return, and is at this moment very ill with sore throat, and I am in great anxiety about her. Well, I will not pester you any longer with my troubles.

John Ruskin, the Oxford Graduate, is a very elegant and distinguished looking young man, tall, fair, and slender—too slender, for there is a consumptive look, and I fear a consumptive tendency—the only cause of grief that he has ever given to his parents. He must be, I suppose, twenty-six or

twenty-seven, but he looks much younger, and has a gentle playfulness — a sort of pretty waywardness, that is quite charming.

He took a fancy to my writings as you did, dearest friend, and came to see me by the introduction of our dear friend Mrs. Cockburn (the Mary Duff of Lord Byron), and now we write to each other, and I hope love each other as you and I do. He passed a fortnight at Keswick, but did not see Wordsworth, although Wordsworth and he had often met in London. The family did not seem to wish it, he said, and in short both he and I feared that there must have been some truth in reports about the decline of intellect of the Bard of Rydal Mount. Nevertheless, Mr. Serjeant Talfourd has just dedicated to him his "Final Memorials of Charles Lamb." Two volumes of letters, containing such as could not, for the tragedy they tell, be published until the death of Miss Lamb, and of others which, for a contrary reason—their comedy—were necessarily suppressed until poor simple George Dyer was safe under ground. Nothing can be better than Lamb's share of these volumes. I can't say so much for the Serjeant's. Bulwer has published a novel ("Harold, the last Saxon King"), very dull as a tale, but good as history, doing justice *to* Harold and *on* William. By-the-way, William Smith, of the Inner Temple, sent me the other day a volume of tragedies, one of which, "Athelwold," is very fine. Do you know him? I never heard the name before.

Now that there is an end of the acted drama, people are writing fine plays.

Mr. Kingsley (almost a neighbour of mine) has just written a very fine dramatic poem on the story of Elizabeth of Hungary, called the 'Saint's Tragedy;' and another neighbour, whose father and mother I know well, has just written the Oxford prize poem, "Columbus in Chains." It is very elegant, and I rejoice at it, for all their sakes. His father, the Rev. C. Blackstone, was a friend and correspondent of Dr. Arnold. The author of "Jane Eyre" (believed to be a governess, and to have been brought up at the establishment of Carus Wilson) has published another novel. And now, dear friend, it is time that I should release you from this tremendous letter. Heaven bless you. Send me word that you are quite well.

Ever yours.

M. R. M.

I'll inquire about Haydon's picture. Thank you much.

Three Mile Cross,
Sept. 24, 1848.

THANK you very heartily, my dear friend, for your most interesting and welcome letter. The more welcome that it conveyed so good an account of your own improving health. Mine continues much as it was, except that I think myself a little better within these few days. But I vary so much,

that I am almost afraid to say so; the rather, that my good little maid observes, that whenever "I brag" of myself, as she calls it, I am sure to fall back almost directly. However, I do all that I can to become stronger, and must hope that at last strength will come.

This last month has been delicious as to weather, and I have crept out in the sunny afternoons, and have sat on the fallen trees in the woody lanes or the furzy commons, reading almost till sunset. Air to me is really life, and I cannot understand how any one can live in a town. Your verses, dear friend, gave me great pleasure. It is a charming accomplishment. I wish Mr. ——— could be content to think so: he wears out every subject, pelts everybody with sonnets, and works at a poetical reputation as a woodcutter at making a faggot. Of course, this not only does his subject no good, but great harm; besides quite destroying the self-respect, which ought to be more to a man of sense and virtue than all the poetry in the world.

At Maidenhead there is a Mr. Noel, a first cousin of Lady Byron's, shy and in ill health, who never came to see me when I was in his neighbourhood, but who sent me his poems, and has written to me once or twice a week ever since. One or two of his poems are exquisite. I was showing them the other day to my neighbour, Mr. Blackstone (the friend and correspondent of Dr. Arnold, as well as the grandson of the judge, and father of the young

man whose "Columbus in Chains" has just got the prize at Oxford), and he observed very truly how fine a book might be made from the poets the world had never found out. Many of our old poets, Herrick, for instance, have only recently won their reputation. Of one thing I am sure, that a fidgety impatience like Mr. ———'s only retards the object.

I have just been reading Auerbach's "Village Tales," translated by Meta Taylor, and they seem to me so utterly worthless, that I cannot help begging you to be very sure of the Maximilian ballads before giving yourself the trouble of translating them. Write a nice prose book, dear friend, as little German in its tone as possible, about the real world, even if that real world be Germany, and avoid those hideous nicknames of which these stories are full, as well as their incredible childishness. I am quite sure that this style of writing will never do in England—it has no vitality. You are born for better things. It is my conviction of this, and my earnest desire for your success, that makes me take the liberty of speaking so freely. The only thing that struck me in that long, worthless volume (which I read only on your account) was an assertion about the usual number of a peasant's family, 'the customary three children.' Are the Germans wise enough to follow this good Malthusian limitation? If so, it really accounts for their comparative prosperity.

I have been reading the "Life and Letters of Dr. Channing," a very long book, where one seems perpetually in presence of a sermon. I know nothing in biography so grave and so ethical; and yet it is ungrateful in me to say a word against one who speaks so kindly of me. I do not mean to say a word against the man; it is his biographer's fault that the book is so heavy. On one point I have intense sympathy with Dr. Channing, his admiration of "Blanco White." *That* three volumes of "Life and Letters" is intensely interesting. Do you know it?

Dan. O'Connell's secretary has published a delightful two volumes, "Recollections of O'Connell." It is as full of story and character as Boswell's "Life of Johnson." I have also been reading some Puseyite novels, of which the authors seem to me mad enough for Bedlam. Fancy one (a Mr. Paget) gravely proposing that all the money usually spent in London during the season should be given to the bishops for the use of Holy Church!!!

Thank you, dear friend, for the list of French books. Mrs. Browning and her husband are still at Florence. I don't think either of them have written anything since their marriage. I am expecting tomorrow a friend from the neighbourhood of Bergholt; not Lady Morton (Mr. Godfrey's widow), but Mrs. Cox, of Lowford, a mutual friend of hers and mine. Lady Morton is also my friend and correspondent, and loves to talk of her son's place as being ennobled by

its being the scene of so many of Constable's pictures. Heaven bless you, dearest friend. Say everything to your sister, and believe me ever most affectionately yours. M. R. M.

Forgive the bad writing; a recumbent position is so much advised, that I write in bed.

Dec. 16, 1848.

I CANNOT thank you enough, my most dear and kind friend, for your graceful and charming attention.

Your delightfnl letter was the first thing that greeted my eyes this Saturday morning, the 16th of December, and on this same day I sit down to bless you for it from the bottom of my heart. I am sixty-one years old to-day. I have never been much of a birth-day keeper—partly because we were always a very small family, my father and mother and myself; partly because I early learnt to think how sad anniversaries might become when they only reminded the survivors of dear friends dead and gone! However, you have found a way to sweeten those sad memories, and twenty times to-day with the recollection of my dear father's bright smile and hearty voice, I have thought how very much he would have joined in my affection for you, with what a keen gratitude he would have appreciated your kindness, and how fine a specimen of manhood

in youth and in age, each would have thought the other.

As it is, I have one female friend come to see me, who is at this instant drying herself from the pouring rain—a lovely woman, still young in mind and person, although turned of forty; and three or four old servants (four indeed), who have come in twenty miles "for auld lang syne;" one of them, who has brought his fiddle, is playing that tune at this instant, to the enchantment of my faithful K——'s sweet little boy. It is something to be surrounded by household ties and homely sympathies. K—— has lived with me off and on for half a score years and will stay with me, please God, as long as we shall both be spared, and the other servants lived with us still longer. The one is the admirable gardener of the great inn at Salt Hill, who, after living with us for fifteen years, married a young woman who had lived with me nearly as long as my own personal servant, and who is really the very model of an intelligent and cultivated man of the people, one in whom the process of self-education has turned to nothing but good. I am very proud of John Lediard and his good little wife. I went to see them this summer, and have never met with a nicer specimen of skill and industry and true English comfort than in his garden and his home.

Now good-by till to-morrow, dear friend.

Monday 18th.—Now let me tell you what you will be glad to hear, that I am really better,

although the complaint is one of the most fluctuating, and may at any time return in full intensity. However, I am certainly better just now, stronger as far as walking is concerned, although still unable to bear company or excitement. I have not spent an evening out for above a twelvemonth, and I do not think I shall ever be equal to that sort of exertion again. I am very thankful to be as I am now, able to take a walk, to call upon an old friend, and then to come home and lie down and read quietly during the greater part of the night. —— admits that my complaint will always recur upon over exertion or over excitement, indeed, upon any excitement or fatigue, but I must be careful; and there is this hope that another year may be better, that *this* one has been among the most generally unhealthy ever known in England. The hospital surgeons all observe that wounds do not heal, and have almost feared to perform operations on that account.

I do not know whether the papers remarked what a friend who keeps a meteorological journal (is that long word rightly spelt?) told me the other day, that the two very remarkable displays of the northern lights that have been seen here in this century, took place on the two nights preceding the flight of Louis Philippe and the Pope. You remember the remarkable meteors that preceded the battle of Ivry. My friend had written this account of those lights (I saw it myself, and it was magnificent) before hearing of either event. Then there is Mr.

Fleming's book on the Papacy printed in 1701 (I have seen one of the old edition) foretelling its downfall in 1794, in 1848, and in 2000. These things are curious.

What is to be the end of the German Revolution? I am glad to see Louis Napoleon where he is. Not merely because he is the nephew of his uncle, but because he will have Thiers and Barrot, two of the best heads in France,* to guide his councils. I know several persons who used to see much of him in England, and they all say that he is a most amiable, unaffected, unassuming person, without Napoleon's genius, but with much of his charm. *Vogue la galère!* I can't help hoping that he may turn out as Octavius did. Certainly the cases are remarkably alike at this moment.

Have you read Lamartine's "Trois ans au Pouvoir"? If not, do. It is a curiosity of self-glorification and national flattery, so made up of fine phrases "full of sound and fury signifying nothing," that one would think it the publication of an enemy.

The political writer that I delight in is Cormenin, who seems to me the very king of pamphleteers, the worthy successor of Paul Louis Courier, and his great predecessor Beaumarchais.

Macaulay's History of James the Second, just printed, is exquisite. Certainly he is our greatest living writer, take him for prose and verse. Don't you think so?

* Miss Mitford changed her opinion of M. Thiers later.—EDITOR.

I have been looking over a quantity of translations from the German lately, dearest friend, and really I cannot get on with them. They all seem to me (except of course Schiller and Goethe, especially the first) incomplete as art; poor, bald, coarse, without life or character or power. The French have faults in plenty, but then look at their vividness, their artistic truth, their marvellous detail, their life and power. To be sure, I read them in the original, and the German in translations, but the first time I read "The Mysteries of Paris" (and I am far from thinking Eugene Sue the equal of Balzac and George Sand, or even of Charles de Bernard) it was a vile American version, yet I saw there all the truth and beauty of Rigolette, that fresh bit of nature, and the admirable management of the details.

I read a great deal of Uhland and of your Count Auersperg, and I confess I do not think anything will make them popular in England. Just compare their ballads with those of Schiller. It *may* be merely individual taste, but my impression is that the English public cares only for the rationalist divines,—people do read *them* either for agreement or for difference; but with regard to other German authors, I found a criticism the other day which seems to me to be true, that they have been made sufficiently known in England to demolish their reputation.

I was amused in reading Carlyle's "Life of

Schiller," to see how much less German his style was in that book than now. He wrote the other day a character of poor Charles Buller, more outlandish than was ever put forth by a man born within the four seas. Poor Charles Buller! he is lamented as few men ever have been. I know his sister well, a singularly clever and charming person.

I trust, dear friend, that your sister is well, and that you will long be spared to each other. I saw the other day the handsome gypsy who foretold a happy destiny to you and to those whom you love. May all good be with you! Ever your faithful friend.

Is Balzac married to a rich woman?

Milne's "Life of Keats" is excellent. He did not die of the "Quarterly," but bore it bravely, and was attended to the last by the most devoted friendship.

Jan. 15, 1849.

I begin writing to you at once, dear Mr. Boner, and I will take care that this letter shall be rightly directed, and shall go from the central post office at Reading, where I can at least ensure their not putting on those vile stamps.

After all, what a far viler thing the spirit of trade (the shop-keeping spirit, as Napoleon used to call it) is, when to a person whom they called a friend they could, for the fractional profit of so much in

the thousand stamps, play such a trick. Because, dear friend, they must have known, and they did know, that to cheat you in this infinitely little manner through me, was what would vex me far more than a direct cheating of myself. Thank you very much for telling me; it has come at a time when it has done me good to accumulate smallnesses in that quarter.

I have been very ill, so ill that nobody expected me to live (I don't mean since I wrote to you last, but in the eight or ten preceding weeks), and little as my poor property is, there will be a few hundreds besides the value of correspondence and so forth, and my good and faithful K—— and her poor little boy are the persons to whom, after remembrances to a few dear friends, those few hundreds would go. Well, the persons you wot of, begrudged to her this little help, and have been trying all sorts of influences to make me suspect her; and failing in that, have shown a degree of passion and bitterness which are very, very sad. It is a great proof of my being really very much better and stronger that all this worry has not entirely upset me; but better and stronger I really am, and although from the nature of the complaint I may any day be visited by a relapse, I am yet thankful for the present respite, and not unhopeful for the future. So much have I been cheered by this amendment, that I have been seized with the strongest fancy to see what seems to me a great piece of poetical justice—the Heir of Napoleon

at the Palace of the Elysée—with my own eyes; and as Henry Chorley, who knows all Paris, is going thither the end of March to assist at the production of Meyerbeer's new opera, "Le Prophète," I have appointed to meet him there, and intend remaining long enough to see the gardens of the Tuileries in all their garniture of leaf and flower.

I shall take my clever little maid and the dear excellent friend who was with me at Taplow, and who, during the course of a very complete medical education, spent some years in Paris; and has, since the death of another younger brother enabled him to leave his profession, frequently revisited the Continent. I wish you could meet us and come back with us to England. Can you? Do. You would like both my escorts. Henry Chorley, clever, crotchety, and good—Mr. Hinton, a thorough and perfect English gentleman, very large-minded, a great historian and political economist, and quite as good as Henry Chorley, and almost as crotchety in a different direction, nervous and shy. Nevertheless they are admirable persons, both, and you would be sure to like them, and they to be charmed with you, and Henry Chorley might be of great and real use to your literary plans.

He (Henry Chorley) is very intimate with Louis Napoleon, and says of him that he is the impersonation of calm and simple honesty. Mr. Kay Shuttleworth sent me word the other day that he wrote himself every word of his letters,

speeches, and proclamations. He has begun well, has he not? Did not that review with its touching scene of the column come in strong contrast to the tawdry trumpery processions of the Provisional Government? He has not, of course, the genius of his uncle, but he has much of his character—simple, graceful, and manly.

I have been reading Lamartine's "Trois Mois au Pouvoir." His worst enemy could not have served him a worse turn than his own vanity has done in collecting and perpetuating those speeches, so hollow, and empty, and sure to come to nothing—as they did. The two most notable things are an address to a class of political economists, in which the ignorance is worthy of Louis Blanc, and the calling Prince Louis Napoleon, 'M. Charles Louis Bonaparte,' a bit of spite which would have done honour to an angry woman.

Do contrive to meet us in Paris. Do—and if not, see if you can send me any letters—especially to persons who know English, for not having spoken or written a word of French for these five and forty years, I shall probably be as nervous and as shy about it as Mr. Hinton himself. It's a droll contrast—my total want of command of the spoken language, and the critical pleasure that I take in its writers. But I shall go.

Thank you, my dear Mr. Boner, for thinking about the picture. Our gifted portrait painter, Mr. Lucas, whose fine portrait of my dear father you remember

so kindly, was here last week, and he is going to paint me this summer just as I am, a real old woman's portrait, in a close quiet cap, or a close quiet bonnet, such as I wear every day. He adds to the great power of giving a likeness like the looking-glass, consummate taste and feeling, so that he will give the expression a friend wishes to see perpetuated—the best expression—without that departure from truth which is called flattery, which no friend does wish for, because it destroys individuality. He stands now deservedly high in his own branch of art, and being a most dear and valued friend, one of those whose conversation I like best in the world, the process of sitting, usually so painful, will be purely pleasing. After I have spoken to him about an engraving, we can consult Mr. Lupton, whose wish to engrave poor Haydon's picture does me so much honour. Of course he would greatly prefer following the painting of so eminent a man as Mr. Lucas, to copying that strange, exaggerated, yet very life-like head, even if it could be found. I have not the slightest notion what has become of it. I saw it last in Wimpole Street, two or three years ago, a huge staring face, looking as if guillotined, so closely was it cut out of the canvas, and so over-sized. I must ask Mrs. Browning if she knows what has become of it. But surely you would prefer a head as you know me, and by John Lucas.

Yes, yes, I don't know those German names

asunder, but I am sure that I read many hundred pages of translations from the poems of *your* Auersperg—otherwise Anastasius something. Is not that definitive? I read a dozen or two of volumes of translations from Uhland, and divers prosemen and versemen, and I grant you that the translations were bad, but so were the versions of Schiller and Goethe, which I read at the same time, and which (the ballads of Schiller, especially,) could not be spoilt. Doubtless Humboldt's letters would have been most interesting. It is wonderful what outrageous blunders translators commit. A certain literary lady here has translated a great part of George Sand, discreetly enough in important points, for a young lady may read her version, but in the very title of one of the books she has contrived to blunder, having rendered "Le Compagnon du Tour de France," "The Companion of the Tour of France," instead of the "Journeyman on his Tour of France;" indeed, she had her choice of two words, and might have said the "Workman." But opening the book I found Basse-cour translated "lower court;" the woman had never heard of a poultry-yard!

I wish you would write a great book upon Germany: its society, its religion, its literature, its art. Such a work by some one who really knows the heart of the country, not a mere superficial observer like William Howitt, would be most welcome. Try that the style shall be light, and lively, and graceful, and idiomatic. It is wonderful what mere style does for

a book. It made Southey, it has made Macaulay. *His* history is making the greatest sensation that has been made since the poems of Byron and the novels of Scott. People find fault with it as not being enough *one* great picture, being a series of rich pictures instead of one complete work of art. But it is a most beautiful book, and I do not see, the object being attained, that we have any right to find fault with the information being communicated in the manner that the author found most agreeable to himself: as well find fault with the historical plays of Shakespeare because they are not cast into one grand epic. I always thought Macaulay the greatest of our living writers, and it is delightful to find him so completely vindicating my admiration.

Have you read the new volumes of Jerome Paturot—"Jerome Paturot à la Recherche de la Meilleure des Republiques?" Do read them. They are full of fun, and a great deal of truth with it. All about George Sand, "Notre Muse," is capital. A friend of mine saw her at a party a short while ago, and heard her say just four words, which happened to be most characteristic. Talking of the Pope, she said, "Il est trop Prêtre." Mrs. Browning used a good word about the Italians lately. Talking of the safety of remaining in Florence, she said, "I rely upon the *softness* of my Tuscans." She expects to be confined next month, poor thing! God grant she pass safely through that trial! You must say anything

for me to your sister. I reckon her among my friends.

Do you know I am thinking of putting down my recollections—shall I? It seems to me that every autobiography is interesting if faithful and sincere. God bless you, my ever dear friend, most faithfully. The weather has been most changeable, sometimes frosty, but oftener wet. I envy you your frozen Danube.

Three Mile Cross,
Feb. 19, 1849.

THANK you heartily, dear friend, for your most kind and welcome letter. Ever since I wrote to you last I have been laid up with influenza, for a fortnight I never stirred from my bed. However, last week's delicious weather set me free again. We have had before the middle of February weather like April; the hedgerows perfumed by violets and primroses, and gay with buttercups, daisies, periwinkles, the fairy blossoms of the wild strawberry and the long tassels of the hazel. I never remember so forward a spring.

As to frost, we have had only about one week deserving the name through the winter. How I should have liked to see the magnificent scene that you describe so finely. It reminds me of the accounts of the breaking up of the ice in the St. Lawrence. However, I am thankful for last week's sunshine for the good it did me, and the good has remained

although the sunshine has vanished. I am still determined upon my journey to Paris, and expect to set out in less than a month. Thank you for promising the letters. Everybody says that my name will be a sufficient introduction, and so forth. Now that is a very pretty speech; but even if it were true, which I do not believe, it would not follow that one could go about proclaiming one's name, or pinning one's card upon one's shawl.

I have a fresh reason for desiring to see Paris since I wrote to you, having been reading twenty-one volumes of Mirabeau, and about as many of *Memoires* of that great orator and statesman. What a man he was! Have you read the life of him by his "fils adoptif," Lucas Montigny. If not, do, I conjure you. It seems to me the most graphic biography in the language, and gives not only Mirabeau from head to foot, but full-length portraits also of his father and uncle, that odious old Marquis (l'Ami des Hommes) and the Bailli. Read that book, I beseech you. In the Brussels edition you will find an "Etude sur Mirabeau," by Victor Hugo, which is exceedingly striking, as all his detached bits of prose, prefaces, and so forth are. But what a man Mirabeau himself was! and how sure I am that my way of reading all I can gather together upon one subject at once, is the best for enjoyment, and for the impression that it makes upon the mind. The hatred one conceives for that old Marquis, and the admiration and interest and

affection (in spite of all his faults), that one cannot help feeling for his great son, seems a sort of renewal of youth. Of course I had met with works of Mirabeau before and speeches, and had a general knowledge of his story, but now I know him as I know an old friend. What a man to be sure! and how many years in advance of his generation!

Thank you for all you tell me of Lamartine, which is exactly my own opinion. He is French to the backbone. Now Napoleon and Mirabeau—Mirabeau especially—were of all time and all countries. They were *men*. I have not seen "Les Confidences;" I have, however, been reading a silly love-story of his called "Raphael." Of course I shall read his "Confidences," and Chateaubriand's "Autobiography," although I hold him also to be greatly overrated. Just read his Indian works, and Cooper's (sad coxcomb as Cooper is!) and one feels at once where the force, and, to a certain point, the truth lies. I say to a certain point, for in reality I presume that neither writer is true. By-the-way, besides my anger at that old Marquis de Mirabeau, I have been exceedingly indignant at Dumont. If he had written Mirabeau's great speeches, why did he not write like that after the great man was dead? Do read Lucas Montigny's "Life" and "Les Discours," and, in short, the whole works—do.

Never was a greater hit than Macaulay has made. It is an able work, but to my mind, and I have read it all through very carefully, it is strangely

cold. There is a want of sympathy, and, above all, of sympathy with misfortune, which one did not expect from the author of the "Lays of Rome." I, too, like you, was astonished at his omitting that striking scene from "Les Memoires de Grammont," but I soon found (as doubtless you have discovered by this time) that his hatred of James was such as would, at all times, prevent his putting down any one thing to his advantage. He is a good hater, and seems to me to take a pleasure in knocking down reputations;—Dryden, for instance—he really seems to begrudge that great master of English prose and English verse his poor hundred a year; and Monmouth, for whose tragic history and misfortunes everybody is accustomed to feel a certain interest, how he delights in trampling upon him. The only one of his attacks on which I feel a strong sympathy was that upon William Penn. One is amused to think what the Friends will say to their great Founder's trotting to two executions in a day. The only person for whom Macaulay seems to care is that cold formal Dutchman, who never became English. It is a very able work, nevertheless, but I like a certain enthusiasm, and even hold it essential to the highest literary merit.

My dear friend, Mrs. Cockburn (Lord Byron's first love, Mary Duff), wrote me word the other day that on inquiring for the best and prettiest Fairy Tales to give to her little grand-daughter, her bookseller had given her *your* book. "I only hope,"

said dear Mrs. Cockburn, "that my little girl may be half as well pleased with it as I have been." She is a most sweet person. I corresponded with her for three years before I found out that her eldest son, who came here with her, was not her husband, so much had she preserved of the youth and loveliness that had charmed the great poet.

So you leave Ratisbon next year! Has it ever occurred to you to take a house in England, and take pupils? You are so fitted for that occupation, and your connexions among the very highest persons must render it so easy, I should think, to fill such an establishment. The only thing against it is, I suppose, your not being in Orders; but then that is mere habit and prejudice, because, in point of fact, the clergyman has enough to do with his cure, the tutor with his pupils. You know best, but that seems to me so honourable—so comfortable a way of life—with your dear sister, or with one still dearer and nearer. I should be so glad to know that you were happily settled, and somewhere where we could meet often, dear friend. Thank you for all you say of the biography. I have not been well enough to begin yet, but I shall (D.V.) when I return from Paris. I shall leave the portrait to Mr. Lucas; his taste is perfect. Adieu, dearest friend. We think of going to the Hotel de la Ville de Paris, near the Madeleine.

April, 2, 1849.

Thank you a thousand and a thousand times, my very dear friend, for your great goodness. May I keep the letter you were so very kind as to send me till the autumn? Because it now seems likely that my journey may be postponed till then.

I am just in the discomfort of changing servants, not my own dear little maid who waits upon me and walks with me, and is literally and really my right hand, but the younger girl who does the housework, and every now and then grows out of her place and wants promotion and higher wages. This has happened now, and it will not do to let an untried stranger have charge of my poor cottage, so until we have had some experience of the new damsel, who is to come to us at Easter, and whom we chose out of three sisters because she sate at work with a little baby brother on her knee, and had tidy hair and a nice bright and good-natured face. What details to send to one who lives in a palace, and hears the turret clock strike at midnight while the watchman traverses the great corridors. But some day you may have just such a little poetical cottage establishment of your own. I believe you would be very happy in such an one, although, I can't tell why, but I always think that your story will end like a romance, by your marrying some great lady and having a chateau to your own share. Such things do happen now and then

in life as well as in books, and you are just the sort of person to justify such a choice and do honour to such a destiny.

I have heard twice of Mrs. Browning since I wrote to you, the first letter to tell me that she was safely confined with a fine boy; the second, that the mother and infant were going on well. The first letter is the only one I ever received from Mr. Browning.

So you are reading "Lucas Montigny's Life of Mirabeau." I am sure it will interest you above all things — it did me. I got only the first three volumes from Rolandi's, and I could not wait for a parcel from London, but sent about the neighbourhood till I met with a friend who had the book, and who sent me twenty-one other volumes of and about Mirabeau. Amongst these were three other biographies—Dumont's lying book, the "Lettres de Cachet," the "Histoire Secrete de la Cour de Berlin," and three very thick volumes of "Discours," containing all his speeches in the National Assembly. I have also read the two trials with his own memoirs and speeches there, and almost all that he ever wrote, except two or three books that never should have been printed, and the famous "Lettres originales du Donjon de Vincennes," the celebrated letters to Sophie, of which many of the biographies contain long extracts, and which I must read altogether.

The extracts from those letters seem to me as

far superior to Rousseau, as passion is to sentiment, or truth to fiction. I must have those five volumes. Lucas Montigny is somewhat of a prig, and does not half enough envy, hate, and detest the Marquis and le Baillï; but I go along with him quite in his enthusiasm for that great man his father, whose faults seem to have been mainly produced by the tremendous tyranny of which he was the object. The domestic tyrannies, his family, the crown, the laws of the kingdom—the provincial parliament—all these, acting upon his burning southern temperament and his tempestuous passions, combined to form that stormy youth; but with all his faults of conduct, how great and how wise a man he was! How much before his age! What a definition of free trade did he give in the brief phrase *laisser faire* and *laisser passer*. What a picture of the French public when he said that for them there were no such words as *toujours* or *jamais!* How genial he was, how kind, how generous, how loveable, how loving! One of his biographers gives a vivid account of the connection of the Marquis with the woman de Pailly, who had been a *femme de chambre* and who ruled them all; and *he* to dare to blame the disorders into which his own avarice and tyranny, and his cold-hearted daughter-in-law drove her gifted husband! Does not that unworthy woman resemble Marie Louise? Mirabeau might well say that his flight was too high and too unequal for her.

In one of the memoirs not inserted in "Lucas

Montigny," he blames himself "for expecting fruit from a tree that could only bear flowers." Is not this most beautiful in its indulgence and its grace? and how like Napoleon's forbearance to Marie Louise! Do tell me all you think of Mirabeau, and do get the "Discours." They are magnificent.

I have been reading "Les Confidences," a pretty book which, whether true or not (and to me, especially coming after the realities of Mirabeau, it bears falsehood stamped upon every page), gives one the very worst possible idea of the writer. This pleased me most: next to the having an enthusiasm justified, one likes to find oneself borne out in a prejudice. He is jealous of Napoleon's fame, as all vain men are—as Lord Byron was. But just fancy what Napoleon would have done in his position last February—or Mirabeau. They were men of thought and action, Lamartine is merely a man of words. Just (to exemplify his falseness) watch the dates in "Les Confidences." You will find him fifteen when he makes love in 1805, and twenty in 1815. Indeed twenty is his favourite age. He sticks at that, just as the maid who is about to leave me called herself nineteen when she came to me two years ago, and calls herself nineteen still. It is clear that the Raphael story is to dovetail in with the end of "Les Confidences" which (in the edition I have seen—is there any continuation?) leaves him on the road to Aix, and to another tragedy. Only fancy a man of sixty writing all this rubbish about girls

dying for love of him—a man who is an historian and an orator, and who pretends to be a statesman! Think whether Napoleon or Mirabeau would have done so. The Sophie correspondence came out after the great writer's death, and without his suspecting that it ever would appear.

I have only read the first part of "Chateaubriand." It is interesting, and seems perfectly true. Talk to me of your impressions of Mirabeau and of these books, and of any new French ones, and tell me what you hear of Louis Napoleon. I have not room here for a pretty story about him that my friend Mr. Hinton told me. He was much beloved and respected at Leamington, where he lived for a year. Above all, dear friend, tell me of yourself. Poor Hartley Coleridge! How the great names go out!

Ever yours,

M. R. M.

P.S. I am reading another collection of Horace Walpole.

Three Mile Cross,
May 6th, 1849.

If I wanted anything beyond my own regard for you, dearest Mr. Boner, and your own most kind letters, I should be reminded of you by the nightingales which are just now singing in such abundance, and peopling all the woods and fields with the notes that you have described so well. We have one most exquisite bird in my poor garden. Oh, such a

bird! Did you ever remark how much nightingale differs from nightingale in force and power and sweetness and variety? I have often noticed it, but never so much as this year, when *our* bird, as K. proudly calls it, and one of equal quality, about two miles off, seem to me to excel all their compeers as much as the greatest singer of the Opera beats his inferiors of the Chorus. Now surely this is not the case with other feathered songsters. Blackbird does not differ from blackbird, nor thrush from thrush. K. and I agreeing perfectly in the superiority of the *two*, dispute as to their separate merits, I rather preferring the distant singer, whom I go to hear every night, she fighting stoutly for *our* neighbour of the garden, as, I believe, because it is ours; such is the magic of the possessive pronoun, even when the application be a mere fiction, as our beloved bird will indicate when he and his mate have reared their family, and they all fly away. All happiness go with them! I love those birds as if they were conscious of my gratitude and affection; and really, I half think that my pet, the far-off neighbour, does know my love for him, for he never fails to salute me as often as I draw near.

How very kind your German and French friends are to me: I owe it chiefly, of course, to your partiality, dearest friend, to which I am but too proud to owe all manner of benefits, but yet I have been accustomed to feel grateful for the good opinion of German readers of English books. It is astonish-

ing how well they know our literature, and how little, to judge from French writers, our authors are known in France. The only one whom they appear really to appreciate is Mrs. Radcliffe—Anne Radcliffe, as they call her, for they do not even mis-spell her name. It is quite amusing to see how much a writer, well nigh forgotten in England, is admired in France. I dare say, now, you never read a page of her novels, and yet such critics as St. Beuve, such poets as Victor Hugo, such novelists as Balzac and George Sand, to say nothing of a thousand inferior writers, talk of her in raptures. I will venture to say that she is quoted fifty times where Scott is quoted once. Indeed, I believe that the *real* merits both of Scott and Shakespeare are little known to them, although they may know the stories of both from operas and so forth, as the mob of the English (by-the-way) know Beaumarchais' great comedies. I used to think that Shakespeare could not be at all rendered in French, but Alfred de Vigny has made a very fair translation of 'Othello,' and Madame Tastu has executed the more difficult task of transposing the garden scene of 'Romeo and Juliet' into verse that is really high poetry.

When you thank your fair friend for her goodness to me, tell her that I still hope to deliver her letter. Perhaps in the autumn, for Paris will be too hot for me now, although the weather here is very cold and stormy. The hail the other day swept every chimney in the house, and did much

mischief to gardens and fields. Henry Chorley says that I had no loss in not meeting him in Paris, for that he never felt so strongly the miserable hollowness and trustlessness of the French character under the thinnest possible crust of gaiety. Well, I hope better things. I like their literature with all its faults, and am well disposed to like them. Tell me if, with all his faults, Mirabeau is not adorable, and yet you ought to read his 'Discours' and his 'Memoires pour Consulter,' and a great deal besides, that good M. Lucas Montigny would not put into his book, because, forsooth, it had been printed before. He is a sad prig, and yet I should like to know him, too, for the sake of the great man whom he has written about.

Good night! dear friend. I wish I were likely to see you this summer, but I fear there is no such good luck in store. Our poor little boy—K.'s little boy—has been very ill, but he is now, thank God, doing well.

Ever most faithfully yours,

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

Sept. 10, 1849.

I CAN hardly tell you, dearest Mr. Boner, how much pleasure your letter gave me—the very sight of your handwriting before I opened it—for I had got afraid that you were ill. You spoil me by your great kindness and goodness and punctuality; and then I recollected your fever, and this

year has been so rife of disease, that one becomes frightened at the least delay in a letter from a distant friend. Soon, very soon, I hope you will be within reach: shall you not? Do you not come to England next spring? There is no one, not even Mrs. Browning, whom I should more rejoice to feel as within comeatable distance—to see very often, and to know all about. The stanzas on the nightingale are very beautiful, but I like the writer better even than the exquisite bird, and had rather hear all about him (which in rare and distant letters is difficult, if not impossible), than even his verses.

I am better and stronger than last year, and should have been greatly so, but for a terrible attack of neuralgia on the left side of the face—the real regular neuralgia, intermittent and without inflammation; downright tic, in short—which I caught at a party at Whiteknights, where I spent a long out-of-door day with Baron Goldsmid and his charming family, and Mr. and Mrs. Cobden —they and I, out of thirty persons, the only Christians. Did you ever see this hero of free trade? He impressed me exceedingly. I expected to find a very clever, powerful man, but coarse and elderly —a man out of a counting-house. On the contrary, he is young-looking, full of taste, grace, elegance, and refinement, playful and gentle in the highest degree. The wife is a true English beauty, rosy round face, and with the sweetest expression pos-

sible. I saw a great deal of him, sitting next him at dinner, and walking about those beautiful grounds side by side with him and Miss Goldsmid, who is herself so very clever a woman that her conversation brings out everybody's best.

Do you know much of the Jews? I have always been interested in the whole race, and my friend, Miss Goldsmid, has taken pains to make me acquainted with them. She has given me a volume of sermons translated, and very finely translated, by herself, from the German of one of their priests named Salomon. They are full of charity and brotherly love, and deserve to be put on the same shelf with the "Lettres Spirituelles" of Fenelon, and the works of Channing and Arnold, which they resemble in largeness of heart and in indulgence to human error. Except "Josephus," I never read any work of a Jewish author before out of the Bible, and unluckily I am not likely to read many, the greater number being, she tells me, in Hebrew, some in Latin, many in Spanish at the time when the Moors were in Spain, and art and science almost in the exclusive hands of the Jews—and now almost all the Jewish publications are in German. I tell you this because, if any of their works fall in your way I think they would interest you. I am sure Salomon's sermons would. He is still alive and working in that great work of brotherly love. Miss Goldsmid is a noble woman.

Here we have been hitherto free of cholera. It has been lurking about in some of the Buckinghamshire villages, upon clay, and amongst those who gather rags for the paper mills, and so trade in dirt, but generally in the country it has kept away. In London it certainly is more widely diffused than is known.

I dined yesterday after a church stone-laying (where the goose who laid the stone actually put on eight trowels-full of mortar, not knowing that the whole affair was make-believe), in company with two notabilities fresh from London, the Bishop of Oxford (Wilberforce) and Baron Rolfe, and both said that they knew of twenty cases in the best streets in Town.

The Baron is really clever, and his wife very pleasant and intelligent. They are only here for a short time, having taken the house of a neighbour of mine while his family is abroad. Very few people comparatively *have* gone abroad this year. I myself still indulge in visions of Paris. Don't you like the conduct of the President? He seems to me quite the ideal of a good prince; because I am convinced that the intervention at Rome (although mismanaged by its agents—the persons intrusted with its execution) was intended to prevent the evils of re-action. It has now become a serious difficulty, in consequence of the idiotism of the Pope. A twelvemonth ago a friend of mine heard George Sand say of him, "*Il est trop prêtre,*" which has

turned out a most just criticism, one of those revelations of character which are almost predictions.

Those nightingale verses are very beautiful, especially the last stanza. Do you think the song melancholy? I do not. It is too full of energy and spirit, has too much verve. I remember a charming letter of poor Charles Fox vindicating the cheerfulness of the song. We have two new poets at Oxford, one the eldest son of Dr. Arnold, whose book I have not seen. It is said to be fine; the other a certain Arthur Clough, who is a poet in the highest sense. Many of his pieces are painfully sceptical. There is now a great reaction there, consequent upon Puseyism, and many of the cleverest young men doubt of all. But this one is a fine poet at all events; that is certain. God bless you! dear friend. Write to me soon and long, and believe me most faithfully and affectionately yours,

M. R. MITFORD.

Dec. 27th, 1849.

THANK you a thousand times, dear friend, for your kind wishes and charming letter. I had begun to be fretful and fidgety about you, and to think your silence long—a very sure proof of my affection; for in a general way I care little for letters, but from you and one or two more I love to hear. Yes, by all means, write the Chamois-hunting book. Two of the most charming productions for many years

have been a work on Deer-stalking, I think, by Mr. Scrope, and another still pleasanter by Mr. St. John, containing a sort of diary of field sports in Scotland, all sorts of field sports mingled with all sorts of natural history. The more minute the better—the more graphic and dramatic; a chamois hunt should be a story. All my youth was passed among sportsmen, especially coursers. My father kept eight or ten brace of first rate greyhounds, belonged to three or four of the great clubs, and has won cups, and goblets in his time. I used to delight in coursing, wrote a poem on it, and was quite as good a judge of a greyhound as of a cricketer. But indeed I love all sorts of field sports and hold it to be a natural instinct. Indeed I am apt to have a slight contempt for the mere penman who can neither bring down a pheasant nor ride up to hounds.

Up to my dear father's death, seven years ago, we used to take in two or three sporting periodicals, and I used to read them to him of an evening. Of course these periodicals contained a good deal about the different continental sports—wild boar hunting, stag shooting, hunting the chamois, &c. Whether there be any work of importance on the last mentioned diversion, I cannot tell, nor is it of consequence. It is altogether an affair of execution. Be graphic, be minute, be dramatic, make an actual existing person of the chamois, and a narrative of the chase, and you will be sure to prosper.

I love all field sports except a battue, which I detest; as well shoot down the poultry in a farmyard, as the game in a well stocked preserve. The legitimate pleasure of the thing is, that it is a pursuit—a seeking and finding, not a mere slaughter.

Do not let me forget to tell you that in a catalogue of Monroe's books of Cambridge University (U. S.) and Boston, I find the Dream of Lillan Tuk, translated by Charles Boner. The catalogue is so select that it is really a compliment. The number of American books that I have received lately is extraordinary; all good; none very good—bits of Longfellow are the best, and an exquisite piece of a speech of Daniel Webster's in an elegant volume called The Boston Book for 1850.

Yes, Esther is very fine, so are all the series of "*Illusions Perdues*" stories, to which that belongs, especially the second "*Un grand homme de Province, à Paris,*" which is, I think, Balzac's very best novel. Mrs. Browning says she hears a wretched account of him, personally, from an American authoress, and I am well disposed to believe it, for with all his great artistic power the man himself seems quite devoid of generous sentiment and kind impulse. Nevertheless he is a great writer.

Mrs. Browning says that her little boy is the wonder of Italy for strength and size. She herself was well enough this summer at the baths of Lucca to climb the courses of extinct volcanoes, on

donkeys, and to lose herself on foot in the chestnut forests. Mr. Lever was there, and we exchanged tender messages. I like his books, and everybody says that the man himself is most brilliant and most charming. Tell me, don't you like the President of the French Republic? I do. He seems to me too good for that fickle nation. Lamartine's Revolution of 1848 is curiously vain and egotistic, even for him. The only interesting part was the account of the running away of the Royal Family.

You don't say anything about your return to England. Tell me your plans when they are formed. I take the truest interest in them. Ever, my dear friend, most faithfully yours,

M. R. M.

Three Mile Cross,
Feb. 1, 1850.

I CANNOT tell you, dear friend, how much your most kind letter rejoiced me. I only got it to-day, the MS. not yet received. But although I shall not finish my epistle till it arrives, I cannot but begin my reply to your letter at once. How like you is that frankness about your plans! and how natural your hesitation! Oh, that I were rich! It is at such times that one feels such a desire, because, accepting me as a sort of aunt, you would not mind. As it is, one does not know how to advise. It seems to me certain that such a person as you must get on, and yet when

one looks at two or three tragical histories of our own times, notably of that of Gerald Griffin, with youth and genius and considerable reputation, and I greatly fear there are more tragedies and worse than that sad story of a broken heart. When one thinks of these things one fears. Another thing too makes one ready to advise against one's own earnest wishes, and that is the high value, the just value, which they evidently set upon you where you are. It is much to be fully esteemed, valued, and appreciated. It is what rarely happens to a very superior person in his own country, or even in his own family. Have you never observed this? Still I do most earnestly wish that something may make it right and expedient for you to come to England. I am sixty-three years old, and cannot of course look forward to what would carry me even beyond the three score years and ten.

It must be as you think *right*, for that is the safest way of deciding after all. I remember my oldest friend, William Harness, when enquiring of me if I knew of a tutor for Mr. Hope's family, saying, 'If I were a single man I would take the situation myself.' He was wedded, like you, to a sister; a sister twenty years younger than himself, who has always made him the nicest little wife in the world. It is a charming natural tie, the most so of all. I always longed for a brother to be proud of and look up to.

Well, I have been in great trouble since I wrote

to you last, and am still in a sort of quarantine. About two months ago my man who drives the little pony carriage, and takes care of my garden, a very steady and respectable servant, was seized with small-pox after vaccination. I was advised to send him away, but we owe duties to others and of course ought to fulfil them: so we did the best we could. He was very, very ill, delirious nearly a fortnight, not a nurse could be got for love or money, and the weather was tremendous. However we got through it, and then my dear maid K.'s little boy, who had been sent home here from his school at Reading because small-pox had broken out next door—he took it, and both his mother and I gave him up. I bless God, however, that he too has recovered; but the people still pass on the other side of the way, and a carriage stops and leaves a card and makes a hurried enquiry. Everybody dreads the infection, and everybody is right. I have lost all faith in vaccination either as preventing or mitigating small-pox. I know of thirty severe cases, five of them fatal, in my own immediate neighbourhood this winter besides those in my own family, and in Reading it has been a pestilence.

K. had had the small-pox the natural way, and I had been inoculated after the old fashion, so we escaped. Our under-maid had been vaccinated for the second time two years ago, but we are not sure about her yet. K., who is a perfect sister of charity

in illness, has suffered so much from anxiety and fatigue, that I am alarmed about her.

I have not been ill, for which I am very thankful. That dreadful tic, Mr. Hay says, is manageable in my case, because it has not taken the hold of my constitution, that it does when it seizes people earlier in life. But I have great reason to be thankful that I have not had it this winter, between the cold and the worry.

If K. be well enough, I should like to go to town in a fortnight to see a play by Henry Chorley, which is coming out at the "Surrey." The author read it to me when he was writing it, and would like to see me there the first night. He, who lives much with fine people and thinks them cold, (I suppose they are so) says that he likes the notion of a Faubourg audience; but I am rather afraid that neither audience nor actors will be quite equal to a most refined and elegant blank-verse comedy. It is called "Old Love and New Fortune," and is very beautifully written. The books I have liked best lately are "Southey's Life and Letters," and "Shirley," by the author of "Jane Eyre." Now, good-night. God bless you, my dear friend.

P.S. Feb. 21.—Henry Chorley's play has succeeded, I am glad to say, although I could not get to see it. I must go to town when you come there.

Three Mile Cross,
March 18, 1850.

The MS. I shall keep for your orders. I hope you will come and fetch it in person. I have only cursorily looked over the pages. They seem to me very delightful. There is a tinge of un-English idiom all through, too subtle, perhaps to be caught, but there it is, and there let it be. It rather in my mind adds to the *couleur locale*. It tells its own true story: I am written by an English gentleman—scholar, poet and sportsman as well as gentleman—who has lived long abroad.

You cannot imagine how much better I am than I have been during the last two or three years. I think that ever since violetting began I have walked eight or nine miles every day. We have had glorious weather; hardly a drop of rain for this month past, and dust enough to ransom all the kings of the earth. Ever, dear friend, affectionately yours.

P.S.—I have now read the whole MS. attentively, and I am charmed with it. There are certain passages quite charming; one about the effect produced on the mind by the immobility of the mountains, the absence of trees, or anything that can move—another on a Bible picture of Jacob leaning on his staff, with a little personal remark at the end, which is most touching and beautiful—the perfection of taste; just enough to interest, not a word

too much. The idiom, too, goes off; a little remains, but only what adds to the individuality. It would be difficult to alter, and I would not if I could. Most sportsmen writing are more prodigal of their shootings. They like to report a great number killed; but I think there is more interest, as well as more truth in your sobriety, in that respect, the death of the one chamois—than in such a multiplied slaughter. I am sure of the success of that book.* It is original and true, and the strong feeling against all this revolutionary excess which prevails in England, will carry your readers along with the forester's lamentations over the slaughter of the chamois by the peasantry. I repeat, I am sure of the book. It is full of poetry, full of you, and worth a million of Andersen's.

Three Mile Cross,
April 7, 1850.

I cannot tell you, dear friend, how glad I was to get your letter, and to find that you had received mine. My good opinion of the book (Chamois Hunting) has gone on increasing. Don't alter it at all. Don't change the style; it gives to it individuality and identity, and really it is graceful and pretty, and the whole book will be charming. I have read almost all that Carlyle has written, and was like you much struck with his "Hero Worship." I am afraid, however, I do not like him

* "Chamois Hunting in the Mountains of Bavaria."

quite as well as you do. In the first place I have a firm persuasion that clear thoughts make clear words, and that where great obscurity exists in the language, the fault will generally be found lower and deeper. In the next I detest and abhor certain atrocities and abominations, which I suppose he means for humour, and which abound especially in the two huge volumes about Cromwell. Thirdly, I mistrust his sincerity and earnestness, chiefly because he says one thing on Monday and another on Tuesday, contradicting himself with as little scruple as he contradicts other people.

I am told by his admirers that the French Revolution is his great work. Perhaps it may be, only I am quite convinced that nobody who did not know the story previously would gain the slightest idea of it from Mr. Carlyle's three volumes, and that is not my theory of a history. His last work, which I have not seen, is said to be eminently socialist, but until translated into English I would always give him the benefit of a doubt. For the rest he has a large following, and is so glad to increase it that you would be received with open arms. Of poetry he is intolerant—at least two friends of mine, Elizabeth Barrett and Mr. Bennett, each sent him a present of their works, and received answers so nearly alike (I saw both of them), that it seemed to me a set form, kept for the purpose. He praised the powers of both lady and gentleman, but deprecated the use made of them, and advised

both parties "to say rather than to sing," which advice being construed, meant, I suppose, to take to prose instead of verse.

The counsel lost him both his admirers. I have never heard either of them mention his name since. For my own part I never saw him, and having never had any sort of intercourse with him, am at least free from personal prejudice. Do you know Emerson, the American Essayist? It seems to me that he would have been a great writer and thinker, if Carlyle had not fallen in his way. Now he appears a mere copyist of the Scotchman. At one time I apprehended his queer jargon to be German idiom (I mean Carlyle's) although his "Life of Schiller" comes nearer to English than his later works, but a German Jewess, who was talking to me about him said, he was the most difficult English author that she had ever attempted to translate into German.

After you have read more of him, you will like him less. I am quite sure that your fine taste will be repelled by the horrible coarseness of some of his nicknames in the Cromwell book. He is constantly talking of flunkeyism, and trades upon half-a-dozen cant words of that order.

Oh how I should have liked to see that mask of Napoleon! His face is the very ideal of beauty in all the prints and paintings: the upper part all power, the lower all sweetness. The greatest sin ever committed by a nation was ours in letting that great man perish at St. Helena.

I have just finished the third volume of "Southey's Life and Letters:" all his old friends complain of the selection and the omissions, and say that Cuthbert Southey, the son, who is editing the work, is a young man quite incompetent to choose from the enormous mass of correspondence at his disposal. I only hope that all will be eventually published, for although there is much in which I do not agree, I delight in the letters and could read a hundred such.

How very glad I shall be to see you! You must be here as much as you can. Perhaps I shall be in town part of the time. The more I think of the stag part the less I think any change will be needed. I like the book more and more.

This is my last word. Ever yours,

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

May —, 1850.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I received your letter to-day, (Saturday) and immediately did up your MS. (that charming MS.) and sent it into Reading with a note to the post-master, commending it to his especial charge, and I have his answer in return. There has been some delay in the few notes that have passed between us since your arrival in London, although I cannot find out exactly at what point. I received your first despatch on Wednesday, and answered it by return of post. That note you ought to have got on Thursday. Now to-day comes your second note, undated, but clearly written as

soon as you had read mine. I tell you this, first of all to clear myself from any neglect or delay in the transmittal of the MS.; in the second place to show that it will be necessary to give two or three days' notice of your arrival. I can send to meet you, dear friend, and I need not say with what pleasure.

This illness of mine has been very badly timed, for I had hoped to go to town for a week or two, and should have been charmed to have timed it so as to meet you there, but now I cannot venture. It seems as if I could bear no excitement or fatigue. On Thursday I was so much better as to take a short drive, but yesterday the feverish symptoms all returned, and I was so ill as not to get up all day. To-day I am better again, and I hope the amendment will continue, but I shall gain no real strength until I am able to be in the air for a long time every day. It is a necessity with me—is the open air.

I sent a little note in the packet to say how sure I felt of the success of the Chamois Shooting, and that I was always more fastidious with the works of a friend than with those of a stranger. I did this because, however little worth my opinion might be, it may still go for something with a bookseller, and it is only the truth. That book cannot fail of success. Let me know that you receive the packet. Most affectionately yours,

M. R. MITFORD.

May 28, 1850.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have so entire a reliance upon your kindness and upon your knowledge of my sincere attachment to you, that I think it best to be quite frank with you, even although it seems inhospitable to be so. The fact is that I continue so poorly that the prospect of receiving you for some days, which would, if I were well, give me most unmixed pleasure, has become a source of anxiety to me. I have no one to supply my place in endeavouring to entertain you—no near neighbour even to whom I could delegate so pleasant an office, and I myself, although I have two or three times got out for a drive, have only left my room to get in to my little carriage, and have been obliged to go to bed as soon as I returned; nor do I seem likely to be soon equal to greater exertion. Under these circumstances you will understand how very much I should feel vexed that a friend whom I so much value should be solitary in my poor cottage, where, except books, there would be nothing on earth to contribute to his amusement, and how entirely this consciousness would weigh upon me and increase the inability which I so lament.

The rooms, too, which I had hoped to secure for you are at present occupied, and it seems to me better to say this at once, and to beg you to let me see you as you did before for a day—to which I hope to be equal; rather than to drag you from all the tempta-

tions of society and amusement in London, without being able to offer you even my poor company here. Even Mr. ——, who could have taken you about to see what is worth visiting in this neighbourhood, has shown himself so meddling that I have ceased to have intercourse with him for above a year.

Pray forgive this truth speaking. My good nursemaid, who knows me better than anybody else, and is the best nurse and the best and kindest creature that lives, has prompted me to do so, and yet I can hardly bear what seems so ungrateful and so inhospitable. Let me hear of the fate of the Chamois Shooting, and pray do not think ill of me. Ever yours,

M. R. MITFORD.

May 31, 1850.

I thank you, my dear friend, from the bottom of my heart for taking so kindly what it so much vexed and shocked me to write. I believe though that I was right, for I have only seen two friends, one on indispensable business, since I have been ill, and although much better on the whole, I can never answer for myself for two days together. Indeed I believe it is consciousness of having no one to take my place that frets me more than anything. Except when I have an honoured guest I never feel this, for I am accustomed to live alone and like it—books are really enough for me—but I shall be charmed to see you in a little while, and you must be sure to let me know when you can come. I

have much to say to you, and more to hear. Did I tell you that this poor cottage is falling to pieces, and that I have given notice to quit? The owner is a young boy, a ward in Chancery, and the receiver under the master, a man who is letting all the houses go to ruin to save himself trouble, so that there is no chance of having it repaired. This grieves me much. God bless you, dear friend.

P. S.—I should be quite well enough to see you for a day before you went into Devonshire. It is only any length of time that would try me, because I should then try to get up sooner and stay up later. For a day if it suited you, dear friend, I could manage quite well, and then we could talk over a longer visit after your return from Devonshire. I should not dream of having anybody to meet you. This is quite the truth.

July 3, 1850.

I have been sore afraid that you misconstrue my feelings respecting you. You must make allowances, dear friend, for my peculiar situation with regard to visitors. I live quite alone with no one to help me to entertain my friends. My health is so uncertain that I never can get to a friend before one or two in the day, and sometimes (as to-day) I do not find it possible to get out before four or five. I myself take what serves me for breakfast and dinner in bed, and am ill if I do otherwise. All these habits are probably bad, but they are so fixed that my medical

friends say I must not change them; that I have made my life and must persevere.

If in anything I have failed, pardon it, dearest friend. It had no origin in want of regard, I assure you. Write to me very soon and say that you see my difficulties and forgive them. I have so little to offer. I have written fourteen articles for Henry Chorley—they will, I hope, do him good and he says that they will make a pretty graceful book. They are of things little known, and I think you will like them. Do come and let us talk it over, and your charming book too. God bless you. Ever yours.

July 10, 1850.

I can't tell you, my dear friend, how glad I was to get your letter and to hear I was likely to see you. I am so conscious of the odd way in which I live, and of the real shortcoming in the way of hospitality, that especially when I am poorly must make itself felt, owing to my having nobody to supply my place, and living with so few servants at such a distance from a town, that I was really afraid I had said or done something insupportable, even to one so very kind and indulgent as yourself. Thank God I was mistaken! It is only with respect to one whom I love dearly that I should so fidget myself; for in general mere acquaintances worry me, and the less I see of them the better; but when I once love a friend I cling to him, and am in

proportion vexed at the chance of any discomfort between us. Thank you heartily for your most kind letter. I shall be so glad to see you again. Ever since you went away I have been very busy. I have written the articles of which I send you a list. I should not wonder if the whole made two volumes. It is first to be published in "The Lady's Companion," which Henry Chorley is editing; but, of course, the real temptation is the putting it into a book afterwards; a very pretty book it will be, the extracts being for the most part capital and very little known, and my prose as good, I think, as I ever wrote. It is really a comfort to me to find that I write no worse after so long a cessation. My prose is sometimes Introductions (one in the 'Our Village' style I wrote the Sunday night you went away), sometimes criticisms or biographies of the authors. I think you will like it. William Harness tells me to-day of a certain Barnes, a Dorsetshire poet. Ask about him, he says he is excellent, and you are likely to hear of him in the West. I had a letter to-day from poor Mrs. Haydon, after a silence of years. She says her son Frederick is coming to Reading and will call here. If he is here a fortnight hence, I hope you and he will meet.

I am sure that your book will be charming.

The horse that threw Sir Robert (Peel) was a Berkshire horse, called Repealer. My man had the care of him before he came to me two years ago. He played no tricks then, but afterwards, when sold to

another neighbour of mine, he used to throw the stable-boys who mounted him for exercise, and was altogether unfit for a bad rider like poor Sir Robert Peel to mount.

August 8, 1850.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have just been writing six letters (yesterday I wrote ten), and have only a moment in case Mr. Haydon does not call on you, or in case he misses you, to enclose his to me, by which you will see what he says about his father's autobiography. I have told him that he had no sort of call to apologize to me for his not writing, that I was, as I am, overdone with letters, that I hoped to call on Mrs. and Miss Haydon when I went to town, and till then I sent him my best wishes.

Mrs. Praed, poor dear, has been nursing her children in scarlet fever, but has now sent me all the materials, memorandum book and all. It will be a capital article, so will, or rather so is Catherine Fanshawe, and I have some fine translations by Leigh Hunt. I did not think it had been in him.

Adieu, dear friend. All success! All health! All happiness! Ever faithfully yours,

M. R. MITFORD.

[With a letter from Fred. Haydon. *Interesting*, very, on account of his remarks on his father's journals.]

C. B.

Three Mile Cross,
October 5th, 1850.

Thank you heartily, my dear friend, for your interesting letter. I see what the Chamois Shooting will be by what the real and actual adventures are; and before I forget it, let me ask you if you, while in England, heard talk of a novel called "The Initials?"* Mr. Lovejoy's catalogue lays it to Mrs. Eastlake. William Harness says that the authorship is a secret, and that it is attributed to some young men who went to board in Munich to acquire complete mastery over German. At all events it is a clever book—wants only a little of being very clever, and as it mentions chamois shooting after a fashion that rather leads one to apprehend it may be a woman's handiwork. Inasmuch as it is thoroughly unsportsmanlike, it will be of the greatest use to you by exciting curiosity about the subject without gratifying it. The Lion-hunting book, too, is abundant Münchhausenish—has had an article of the *Times* given to it in that character, and will really do good to a truthful and moderate work on field-sports, so that these things are working for you.

The "Initials,"† contains a strange homely primi-

* By Baroness Tautphœus.

† This work has attained great popularity, and its merits allowed by the ablest critics of the day.—EDITOR.

tive picture of Bavarian social life. A Baroness is shown superintending the making of soup!—a Major's wife ironing her husband's shirts, and all the accomplished ladies of what we should call the middle classes—people who play and sing and speak languages—as doing their own cookery! Is this so? The book has had a great success, rather more than it deserves, but the result is that one believes these things.

You are very good in wishing to know about my poor doings. I have written twenty-six articles.

I shall make about forty articles, the next being "Chatterton." You should just see what materials I have got for political squibs. The Rolliad and Probationary Odes (my own copy long lost and oddly recovered)—five volumes of "New Foundling Hospital for Wit," nine volumes of "Poetical Register," eleven of "Spirit of the Public Journals," five volumes of "Peter Pindar"—the thick quarto of the famous "Westminster Election," when the Duchess of Devonshire got a vote for a kiss, and the thin quarto of "Poems of the Anti Jacobin."

Poor Henry Chorley has got the gout in his right hand, and really when one considers the vile trash of vanities, fineries, and frivolities contained in "The Lady's Companion," and the stern and earnest protest against all such trumpery held forth in the greater part of my articles, especially

those on William Spencer and Clare, it does seem as strange a conjunction as ever was beheld. When gathered together in their own volumes they will at least have the merit of consistency.

I shall see on Tuesday a lady (Mrs. Cox) my old schoolfellow, who inhabits the next parish to Bergholt, and thinks of Constable as you like him to be thought of. At your lodgings we have just now a Mr. Pasmore, an artist, who is painting the wheelwright's shop—an interior—and will, I really think, make a fine thing of it; at once rich, deep, and clear. Did you ever go into that curious old shop with its high open roof? It is singularly picturesque and affluent in details. I am to lend him K.'s little boy for a foreground figure. With regard to my house, this vexatious suspense still continues. A builder has been over it to make an estimate, and there is to be a new Receiver under the Master on the first of next month; so, as new brooms sweep clean there may be some chance that the repairs may then be set about, or rather perhaps next spring, if by any chance we can get through the winter. But the builder declared he had never seen a place in such a state in his life, and how we and the pony shall get through the time I really cannot tell. Now that I have given over all ambition respecting flowers I have some magnificent seedling dahlias, some of the most beautiful either for shape or colour

that I ever saw. It is a splendid flower, too, and tends to re-waken one's old feelings. We had one fine seedling last year and lost it through over care, but I trust to save these. Only think of M. de Balzac being dead! a great writer with all his faults, and still in middle life.

We have had some frightful robberies, one in a clergyman's house attended with murder. The place (which I happen to know) is wild and desolate, just a fit scene for such a tragedy. God bless you, dear friend. All luck to your sport—which means little more than skill, and happiness, and health to you personally. Farewell.—Ever yours,

M. R. M.

Thank God I am in very good plight, but rather dreading the long damp winter which seems already to have begun. The builder said he wondered that this house had not been the death of us all, especially the Pony.

Nov. 1850.

I was just about to write to you, dearest Mr. Boner, to tell you of the sincere sorrow with which I heard of your trying illness, when this packet made its appearance (November 18th, 1850) and I do not lose a moment in acknowledging its receipt. I have been delighted to hear of your recovery, and I am charmed with this first chapter. There is one

thing which is the result of your living abroad and thinking in a foreign idiom—the use of "one" and "you"—(you know what I mean in the sense of the French "on"). We in England use "one" in that sense in conversation, but not often otherwise. Here, you begin the book with it, and carry it through the first page, if not through two pages. Of course the sooner we get to the mountains the better—the chamois being the real subject of the book. But that play * must have been a curious thing, chiefly curious as showing how much ignorance and barbarism still exist among nations called civilized. I shall take all care of this MS. and hold it at your disposal. Is it *your* prince who is leading the Bavarian army in Hesse under the title of the Prince of Thurn und Taxis? The general feeling about these German quarrels here is that the whole nation is crazy; going to fight about nothing; the king of Prussia being rather the worst used of all. However we have no cause to talk about the follies of our neighbours, God knows, for all England is in one blaze of bigoted Protestantism, not at all unlikely to burn all the Catholics by way of vindicating liberty of conscience. To be sure the Pope has acted like an idiot in sending a Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster and a whole popish hierarchy amongst our No-popery population. But still I had hoped that in the middle of the nineteenth century we were above

* Ammergau Passions-Spiel.

and beyond these furious religious cries, and I really had expected better things of Lord John than that he should write a furious letter in vindication of the Queen's supremacy. For my part I hate priestcraft. Christianity, as we find it in the New Testament, is a very different matter, far more charitable and more practical, and by-and-by posterity will probably stick to the essence and reject much of the outward form.

The only person who really keeps one's enthusiasm alive just now is Louis Napoleon. That message of his is beautiful; so were many of his addresses during his different journeys, and the manner in which he speaks of himself (so difficult a test) is always charming from its modesty, its delicacy, and its truth. There is about all he says a calm dignity that contrasts strongly with the usual tone of French exaggeration. He is too good for them, and I dare say will have to return to England poor and exiled, but leaving behind him a name not unworthy the nephew of Napoleon.

Henry Phillips was here last Thursday with what he calls a musical poem founded on "Our Village." It has little of mine in it, but is very beautiful musically.

All you tell me of Mr. Constable is most interesting. I am myself most unwilling to set to writing.

Feb. 11, 1851.

I don't quite like the new chapter so well as the old ones, dear friend, and I will tell you why.* The new chapter is one that talks about nothing. Now to do that requires exquisite charm and point, and taste, and grace, and above all a perfect command of *idiom*, which no one can retain who does not habitually speak English, read English, and think in English; so that if this first chapter (by which so many people judge) could be shortened or filled with things, facts, instead of words, it would be better. I tell you the absolute truth for the good of the book.

This first chapter *will do*, but it will not prepossess as it should do. I know you will pardon me for saying this. It seems to me worth while to take great pains with this book, because the whole of the chamois shooting part is far better than anything you have ever done, and likely to make you a name which will be useful in every way; so that it is the duty of a fastidious friend "who is nothing if not critical," to give you the full benefit of her fastidiousness. There are such millions of books now-a-days that it is most difficult to win a name, and it can only be done by seizing happy subjects, and treating them in the most efficient way. Above all, mere wordiness must be avoided; very few people indeed have the art of commanding atten-

* Miss Mitford is again referring to Mr. Boner's "Chamois Hunting."

tion by the mere play of words, the very trick of style—a doubtful merit at the best, but a thing in which failure is more than commonly bad. Get as much stuff as you can, real facts for the book, and think rather of making it shorter than making it longer, and the work can hardly fail of making its way.

Your letter gave me great pleasure. The attack on Wiseman has brought him out in full force. Have you read his appeal? If not, do. I mean of course in English, for eloquence is well nigh as untranslatable as poetry, and also read his "Lectures on the Hierarchy." There are passages in both as fine as anything in English prose. I saw a friend of his the other day who says that every post brings to the Cardinal the most frightful threatening letters, and only in yesterday's *Times*, I saw an account of a mob that paraded Golden Square, where he lives, with a mock Pope, and so forth. On the whole, however, I think the agitation will do good. It will bring into perfect view the bigotries of our so-called religionists of every sect, and of every party, and it has already called out a large number of persons opposing these bigotries.

Mr. Roebuck has written one of his capital, scornful letters. Half the influential weekly journals are printing excellent common sense. The actual people,—those who attend Mechanics' Institutes, and have begun to take so high a standing in

our country, laugh the thing to scorn. The *Times* of course took it up like the Minister, as a claptrap, but I believe Lord John repents, and we all know that a turn the more costs little to "the leading journal of Europe." When I go to London I mean to hear the Cardinal. He is only forty-nine: young to have attained so high a position; a large man with a comparatively weak voice, so that the delivery is not equal to the writing. If it were, it would be perfection. There is no living man who approaches him in English prose. I prefer him to Burke.

I have been writing little lately, having been unusually unwell this wet, dreary, dirty winter—the sort of low fever that belongs to influenza, proceeding partly from the weather, and still more from the incurable dampness of this old cottage. I do now hope to get the one at Swallowfield, but dare not venture to expect it until all is settled; certainly I cannot spend another winter here. I have been reading a great deal. Wordsworth's long prosy poem—which I suspect nobody will fairly get through, so interminable is it and so level; Southey's thousand and one posthumous works, Life and Letters and Common-place Books, and all the poems; about thirty volumes I have been reading of Southey, prose and verse, and could read thirty more. The volumes of the "Romance of the Peerage," most interesting; Leigh Hunt's Autobiography, likeable with all its faults; Lamartine's "Geneviève;" "Alton Locke," a very curious bit of

Church of England socialism, by a neighbour of mine, Mr. Kingsley; and three striking American books—"The Scarlet Letter," a wild romantic tale of the elder days of Boston; "Songs of Labour;" "Poems," by John Whittier; and a most striking little book called "Astrea," by Oliver Holmes, a poem recited before a society at Yale College, and printed by them. We have had nothing like it for years. It is a combination of Goldsmith, Pope, and Dryden, but thoroughly native and original, full of strength and beauty, of pathos and power, with a graphic force of diction, a harmony of versification, and a general finish that we look for in vain on this side the water. What a model for our young poets! I wish Mr. —— would copy it. He gives no very good account of his own book. Chapman told him his book "was moving," but his expectations were so highly raised that I fear he will be disappointed.

I fully believe what you tell me of German politics. All seems hollow. France will I hope cleave to Louis Napoleon. The National Assembly, with its old worn-out party leaders, cuts a deplorable figure. The English press is almost universally in his favour; all that he says bears upon it an impress of truth, and thought, and personal character of a high stamp. I know no one who has so much profited by his own misfortunes and mistakes. If God grant me life and health, I hope to finish two or three volumes of "Readings" against next

autumn, and bring them out in a separate form. I heard an account of Miss Bremer the other day—a little old woman, with milk-white hair, older, I suppose, than I am.

I have never heard a word of Haydon's book or of his son.

Feb. 28, 1851.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Before talking of anything else let me say that the apparent change of my opinion arose partly from a re-perusal of the chapter in question, partly from the sincere conviction I entertain that it is the duty of a friend, when appealed to on a question of criticism, to tell the absolute truth, however painful to both parties, partly from the very high hopes that I have from the first cherished with regard to that book, which ought to make a name, and will do so if care be taken to weed from it all that is not really good. Now I am even more impressed with the sense of the necessity of your abstaining from all mere wordiness—verbiage, freaks of words—from the very interesting bit of Chambers' Journal that you have sent me—the immense difference between the introductory part of the writing, and the description of the speeches that comes after. The one is absolutely bad, the other positively good. I see perfectly the cause of this. You have lost the *command* of the English language and idiom. How should you have retained it, living as you have done for eight years entirely apart from

English people; reading, writing, talking, and thinking in German? Some authors (Mr. Lever for instance) live abroad with impunity, but then they are surrounded with English people, their own families, and their principal associates being English or American. There is the difference.

Did you never see a good bowler in the intervals of a game of cricket tossing the ball about here and there, now low upon the ground, now high among the trees, always, amidst his seeming carelessness, hitting exactly the very point at which he aimed? And did you doubt for a moment that it was the practised eye and the practised hand which produced that constant truth of aim? Now this is what you have for the present lost, and therefore you must abstain from these verbal sports and say only what you have to say as simply as possible. When full of matter, when the reader's attention is directed to facts and narrative, the want of this power to gambol and curvet is not felt. I am not very sure that the use of such a power is ever very wise, even in those who possess it in the highest perfection, but mere writing when not of undeniable gracefulness—in short *failure* in such an attempt is of all things the most dangerous, and would tend to diminish the merits of the better parts more than I like to think or to say. Observe that in these, perhaps uncivil truths, I in nothing detract from the real talent or charm of the book. I am only most desirous that the high qualities it evinces should not be thrown away.

You ought to make that book your literary stake, and write and re-write until you have done the very best you can do; because, dear friend, all that you say about not being able to correct is mere laziness. What would you say to one of your pupils who should make the same excuse? Even to this hour I write and re-write and write again, and am *then* dissatisfied, and if I were not it would be a sign to myself that I was becoming like the Archbishop to Gil Blas, and must leave off.

Thank you very much for the bit of Chambers. Cobden is exactly true, only that in society he is more refined. What you tell me of Girardin is very interesting. Is he an illegitimate son of Napoleon? He is spoilt by the instability and trickery of the French character, from which Louis Napoleon is so free, and also, I suppose, by the vanity. Did you ever read a very curious and remarkable play of his wife's, taken partly from one of Balzac's best novels, and partly from a story respecting that detestable "little piece of mischief" Thiers, partly from the sad end of Baron Gros, the painter? It is called "L'Ecole des Journalistes." She read it herself to all the most remarkable journalists and authors of Paris, and I read it in a Bruxelles edition with several feuilletons about it appended thereunto, especially a letter to the authoress by Jules Janin, one of his best, in which he calls her his "beau confrère." Do read it. The comedy itself is very clever, as if inspired by the

great novel, "Un grand homme de Province à Paris," which suggested it to her fancy.

By the way, it is all the nothings which in Jules Janin are so charming that you must resolutely abstain from imitating at present. Content yourself with better things. This new chapter leading to no result seems to me rather *long*. Can't you make an adventure or two? Artistic truth and literal truth are very different. As an instance of your foreign idiom take "but the brightness lasts not long," which is not bad English but yet is certainly not such as you would have written if you had never left your own country. It is these intangible niceties occurring in every page that make me urge upon you the putting in more matter; so that the reader may never have to think of the expression.

Do you know Cardinal Wiseman? It was a whole party of Catholics, his friends and admirers, who, in answer to my questions about his delivery, made the remark as to the weakness of his voice, "a small voice from a large person," always a disappointing thing, but both they and I were thinking of public speaking, which is, you know, very different from talking in a room. Of course you read his "Appeal." I think that, especially the latter part about the title of Westminster, one of the finest pieces of prose in the language. He is a most accomplished man of letters, and that appeal fairly dumbfounded the *Times* for a week. We are all to pieces as to a ministry, and it is said that the Prince and the Queen are now so

much afraid of the result of that folly the Grand Exhibition, that they will only go up to town for state balls and levees and drawing-rooms, and continue to reside at Windsor. Already the park is a scene of tremendous disorder. Think what it will be when all the mob of foreigners and of our own artizans shall be added to the rogues and pickpockets of London! Besides which, after having built the trees in they will infallibly be cut down, and I believe everybody is agreed in wishing that it could have been all swept away and things replaced as they were.

You will be more interested to hear that I have at length all but a certainty of the Swallowfield Cottage. It will be a great expense, but I do not wish to quit the neighbourhood, and here I cannot stay; as, although rather better, my health has suffered much this winter.

You will delight in Dr. Holmes, for a doctor he is, being, although still quite a young man, one of the most eminent physicians in Boston. If you see the "Lady's Companion" you will find two extracts from his works in the next number of the most extraordinary point and beauty. We have nothing that approaches him for the polish and felicity of his diction. He is quite as remarkable for largeness and justness of thought. Mr. Fields tells me that he sings his own gay and brilliant songs most exquisitely, and speaks as finely as he writes; and is altogether so charming a person that people are ill on purpose to be attended by him. He sent me his own poems himself the other

day, and his handwriting is most clear and beautiful, and his face such as could belong to nobody else, with lofty thoughts on the brow and a sparkle of humour in the eye. Depend upon it neither Longfellow nor Whittier are to be compared with him. I have written to him just as I think, and we shall probably be friends.

The "Lady's Companion" is now printed monthly —a great improvement. Except the article on Dr. Holmes I have not been well enough to write anything *new* for it since the autumn, but hope to give a long article on Chatterton shortly. They have continued to give my articles, but they have been those I wrote last summer. I still expect to bring out my own book in the autumn, and I hope you will like it.

At my new home I shall be within half-a-mile of Sir Henry Russell's park and family, a great acquisition, for they are accomplished people, and he has a fine library, buys the best foreign books, and lends me any I want. It is the house where Lord Clarendon wrote his history. I have not heard of Andersen's book. He had a momentary reputation in England, but it is quite past and gone.* We are an ungrateful people, and knock down our idols to avenge our own idolatry. You'll see that will be the case with Wordsworth, who, first under-rated, then over-rated, will fall again

* This opinion of the "Danish Goldsmith" has not been endorsed by the English public, with whom Andersen is as popular as ever.—EDITOR.

below his proper level, ay, and very soon. The posthumous articles upon him would have driven him crazy, poor man. By the way there is a flaming review of Lord Holland's book in the last "Edinburgh" (by Lord Monteagle). I have been reading the book itself, which, although it interested me on account of Napoleon, is certainly very inferior to the Lope da Vega book and the opportunities of the Author. Have you read "Alton Locke?" I am now reading a fine American work just sent me.

The "Scarlet Letter" is not to be had in England. You ought to have seen it here. It is a wild tale of the Pilgrim Fathers, very striking and poetical. The author (Mr. Hawthorne) is now busy at another tale.—Ever yours,

M. R. MITFORD.

April 17, 1851.

YOU are the most docile receiver of a criticism in the world, dear Mr. Boner; too much so, perhaps, for you make me now doubt myself. I mean that you make me think it quite possible I have been rather nervous and anxious in performing an unpleasant office of friendship, and may have forgotten (in the case of the last chapter especially) that reading in MS., and in small portions, is really an unfair way of judging of a book that should be got through at a sitting. As a general rule I can safely say put as much matter into the volume as possible.

I am sure of your liking Dr. Holmes. The manliness, the cheerfulness, the healthy searching spirit, the constant candour, the large charity, the total absence of cant, joined to a power of painting in words nothing short of miraculous. I will give you one little specimen. He is describing the bursting forth of an American spring and the spring flowers:

> "The spendthrift crocus bursting through the mould,
> Naked and shivering with his cup of gold."

There are hundreds of such lines, and the tone is so scholarly, so masterly. God grant that it make a complete change in our vile school of obscurity, crudeness, and self-conceit. Dr. Holmes is still a young man, but already one of the most eminent physicians of Boston, and the very idol of the place, being a most accomplished person, master of half-a-dozen languages, a charming singer of his own charming songs, and speaking even better than he writes. It is quite a treasure-trove.

Mr. Fields sent me the "Astræa" with a large packet of books. I wrote at once my delight in that little volume, and I suppose my letter found its way to Dr. Holmes, for by return of packet came his collected poems, with "For Miss Mitford, with Dr. Holmes' best respects," on the fly-leaf. His portrait is there too, with a fac-simile of his writing; the countenance is fine and characteristic—a grand thoughtful head, with a sparkle of humour in the eye. I have written him a long letter, and feel

that we shall be friends. I don't think that he has been in England—his medical studies were completed at Paris. But all his works are delightfully national, without any of the national foibles.

What you say of Cobden is very true indeed. I wish he had refrained from those foolish peace meetings, for I can't help thinking they have kept him out of power in this crisis. No doubt you are right about Lord Palmerston. I know that to many eminent artists he has been exceedingly insolent, which is more the way of a little man than a great one. I hope the Peel party may come in with some of the Liberals. Sir William Molesworth, for instance, and Mr. Grote: to get rid of the Greys, Elliotts, and Russells seems to be everybody's wish.

I have some Catholic friends who know Cardinal Wiseman well, and speak of his goodness as equal to his talents. Certainly his "Appeal" was a thing to revel in. But I had always a weakness for the ancient church with its art and its poetry, as compared with our establishment, which, discarding all its beauty, retained only the bigotry and the intolerance.

I wish you had heard Victor Hugo as well as Girardin. I am just reading for the second time his Dramas and his *Poesies*, and certainly, allowing for some excess, some extravagance, he is a great dramatist. "Le Roi s'amuse" is a great play; so is "Lucrece Borgia," so is "Marion de l'Orme." I wish you had heard him, although I believe he only reads

his speeches, which we English are hardly contented with, and owing to that cause, or some fault in the delivery, they are called weak. I suppose people expect something as exciting as his tragedies.

I have been looking at a curious volume by Miss Martineau and a Mr. Atkinson, which professes to be a genuine correspondence, and is preceded by four pages of mottoes, chiefly from Lord Bacon, whose experimental philosophy hardly answers for mathematics. She has taken one from her and my friend Archbishop Whately, which, considering that the book is called atheistical, will hardly enchant his grace. For my part I should not have called it by so hard a name. I should rather have doubted whether either the lady or gentleman quite knows the exact thing that the letters do mean. I am sure I do not, and I suspect that many other of their readers will be in the same predicament. A very different book which John Ruskin has just sent me is his "Stones of Venice," most beautiful as to writing and as to decoration. It will make a great hit.

I have finally taken the Swallowfield Cottage, and shall move in the autumn, before which time I hope to finish my readings, which have been delayed all the winter by my being really too poorly to write. Adieu, dear friend. Go on and prosper. Ever faithfully yours,

M. R. M.

Three Mile Cross,
July 20, 1851.

I DO not know, dear Mr. Boner, whether, when I last wrote, I was as dismally lame as I am now, or rather, whether the lameness had lasted so long as to become a settled infirmity. I rather crawl than walk, and am put down in the green lane at three or four o'clock with my little maid and my little dog and my camp stool, and fetched again at seven or eight o'clock, that I may have the air without fatigue.

Partly this lameness, partly the absence of curiosity, have kept me in the country. Chairs are only admitted for an hour or two to the Great Exhibition early on the Saturday morning, and as Mrs. Browning has advanced as far as Paris towards London, I wait to know whether she really does mean to come to England this year before making up my mind to take the journey without the chance of seeing her. Unless she comes, I don't think I shall get to London. I dread the fatigue, and the crowd, and the excitement, and have really less desire to go than can well be conceived. I never was a sight-seer, and the more one questions people about this the less one finds oneself attracted. Sam, whom I sent, says that one-third of the stalls consists of stockings and calico, and things as common as that, and it is wonderful how people are cooling

towards it. We always were a nation of idolaters: always avenging ourselves upon our poor idols for our own idolatry.* We make gods of wood and stone, and then we knock them to pieces, as many a poet, first over-rated then under-rated, can testify, and so we shall do by this, although, to do the most sensible people whom I know justice, they have always laughed at the fashionable madness. Taken at the very best, it is furniture, not art, and if it come to be a winter garden, will probably look better when clothed with gorgeous creepers and filled with fountains, and statues, and flowering shrubs, than it does now.†

Mrs. Browning sent me her book. It is a dull tirade on Italian politics. When I say dull and yet vigorously written, that sounds like a contradiction, but it is not so. The subject, which is not largely though forcibly treated, is so unreal that it excites no sympathy, for it seems to me out of the question that a people without recent poetry, without living literature, without even an attempt at eloquence,—whose last great writer was Alfieri, whose sculpture has dwindled into wood-carving, whose pictorial art into mosaic copies, who have not even produced one man of mark in this general tossing up of nations, should be ripe for freedom and self-government. Year by year they seem to me dwindling. Even music, which held by

* A favourite saying of Miss Mitford's—to be found in several of her letters.—ED.

† A prophetic vision of the Crystal Palace at Sydenham.—ED.

them longest, is now dying away. They have still singers, but they have no composers. Italy is an extinct volcano. The very smoke is gone, and it seems to me wrong as well as foolish to try to provoke a struggle, which can only end in the reaction always so fatal to progress and rational liberty. Don't you agree with me? There are one or two tolerable passages, but the metre is harsh and unattractive, and the triple rhyme of Dante quite unsuited to English verse; and the only result of the book will be a bill at Chapman and Hall's, and a total exclusion from Italy for the writer in case she wants to return thither.* It will make no hit here.

The "Stones of Venice" has a great success. The illustrations by the author are exquisite, and the writing, as always, is good, with his characteristic faults, which people almost accept for beauties. Hawthorne's "House with the Seven Gables," is even finer in the same way than "The Scarlet Letter,"—the legendary part dim, shadowy, and impressive, and the living characters exquisitely true, vivid, and healthful. The heroine, Phœbe, is almost a Shakesperian creation, as fresh and charming as the Rigolette of Eugene Sue. You and the Princess are very good in liking my poor articles; and as to the "Lady's Companion," your knowledge of it is later than mine. I think the last proof I corrected was one of Fishing Songs. God bless you.

* In this part of her criticism Miss Mitford proved entirely mistaken.—ED.

Swallowfield, near Reading,
Sept. 27, 1851.

YOU see, my dear friend, by the date, that the great tearing up by the roots has at last been effected. We moved last Tuesday, a terrible job. There were four tons of books!!! and I had nearly died the first night, for K., in order to ensure my bed-room being washed all over every month, had had every bit of it, ceiling, walls, and all, painted with four coats of paint, and the shutters being hermetically sealed against a breath of air, and the night exceedingly sultry, I was so much affected, that every door and window in the house were obliged to be flung open, and although I have never entered that room since, I have hardly recovered the intolerable smell of the paint. In other respects I like the place. It is exceedingly convenient, the neighbours, high and low, are delighted to get us, and the drives and walks are charming. Indeed, in quiet pastoral beauty it is impossible to exceed this lovely valley of the Loddon, with its green water-meadows and its magnificent trees, quite different from the country nearer Reading—more like a chase or a gentleman's park. About half a mile off is the fine house built by the second Lord Clarendon.

But the great things in this place are the dryness and firmness of the house, and the abundance of water; for at the Cross we have not had a drop, except what we brought from hence, for the last six weeks. Here we have a pump, two springs, a great

ford and the river. I think you will like it, although I have no sitting-room so pretty as that at the old house.

Just after I wrote to you Mrs. Browning arrived in town, and I went there for a week to meet her. A strange thing it seemed to see her walking about like other people. She and her husband are now gone to winter in Paris. I talk of meeting them there in the spring. They have a pretty little boy, but it was odd to hear the English parents and the English nurse talking to him in Italian. I suppose next year they will all talk to him in French, and when English will take its turn, God knows. In their way to England they stopped at Paris, and in the Louvre they thought they saw Alfred Tennyson: looking at the book they found his name written "A. Tennyson, Rentier." (Is not that curious?) So then they met and offered each other their houses, he having a cottage at Twickenham, and they not having given up their apartment at the Casa Guidi. By the way, I don't think they can return to Florence with that book, the "Casa Guidi Windows," against them. When I was in London I heard from three quarters that Mazzini wants to have it translated as a political pamphlet.

Mr. Lucas was so good as to make a day to take me to the Great Exhibition, which is just like a great bazaar, and neither deserves the praise some people give it nor the blame of others. The glass house is light and tasteful. The Duke of Devonshire said to

me a dozen years ago, "Paxton could make half a leaf grow," and he seems to be one of those who succeed in whatever they undertake. The British Gallery this year, filled with the very finest old pictures in England, seemed to me better worth seeing than that exhibition.

John Ruskin (the most fashionable of all our authors just now) told me that he thought he should give up art and take to natural science. One capital article in my book will be Daniel Webster's speeches, which nobody knows. I have just got from America a new edition of two volumes of tales ("Twice Told Tales") by Nathaniel Hawthorne, with a most characteristic portrait and preface. The tales are very inferior to the fine works you have got. I saw a great deal of the Goldsmids when in London, and hope to go to Summerhill near Tunbridge Wells,* the fine old house which Queen Elizabeth gave to Lord Leicester, and where Charles the Second passed so much time, and which Sir Isaac bought a year or two ago, just as it stood, books, pictures and all. I went the other day to Donnington, and over all the fields of the two battles of Newbury, and am certainly better of my lameness though still very lame. Do you know a charming Baroness de Klenze at Munich? She was a Miss Farmer, and is a sweet creature still, although the mother of many children.

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* See "Memoirs de Grammont."

Adieu! my dear friend. Let me know exactly how you are. Ever faithfully yours.

Swallowfield, Nov. 27, 1851.

YES, dear friend, I received your kind letter, and I ought to have thanked you for the details respecting Wildbad, but I suppose that my own moving and my own book jolted everything out of my head. It has been an autumn of singular commotion. The getting this place (which had stood vacant nearly two years whilst lawyers were disputing about the property) into habitable order—the making my old furniture serve, which necessitated a great deal of cutting out and cutting down—the making carpets, the only things I was compelled to purchase, the packing and unpacking my army of books (not all arranged yet) the fixing shelves to hold them: then my book which I own I hope to finish this week—all these things have wearied me exceedingly; however, I am better to-day and yesterday, and hope when once my book is fairly out of hand I shall improve.

I continue delighted with the situation, which is dry, cheerful, and full of beauty. The valley of the Loddon, along which the lanes extend to the back lodge of the Duke's Park, is more exquisitely rich, and soft, and pastoral, with its lovely water-meadows, its bright winding stream, and its magnificent timber, than anything you can imagine. There are bits in it worthy the pencil of Constable, and it is just

the scenery in which he delighted. You must show your proficiency in the business by sketching it when you come to England next.

Then I have had abundance of visitors, some old and valued friends. Dean Milman and his lady (the poet, now Dean of St. Paul's), my friend Mr. Fields, the young American. Did I tell you that he had lost his lovely young wife in her bridal year, and was sent to Europe for change of scene? Seeing him was most pleasant to me. He told me a thousand interesting things; none more so than the account he gives of Hawthorne. He was in extreme penury. My friend Mr. Fields heard of it, went to him, and told him that such was his confidence in his powers that he would print 2,500 copies of any work he might give him, and allow him twenty-five per cent. profit.

"I have a chapter or two," replied the author, "of a little story that I mean to form part of a volume of tales; but what will your partners say?"

"Never mind my partners," said Mr. Fields, "I'll do it on my own responsibility: only show me this beginning." It was the "Scarlet Letter!"

"You must make an entire volume of this," said my friend, and Mr. Hawthorne took his advice. The success is greater than ever has been known both in England and America, and "The House with the Seven Gables," is an equal hit. He is now busy on books for children, and one for grown people also—rich and happy. The remarkable thing is that he

is as modest as a young girl, and thinks himself the most over-rated man in all America. He is a splendid man personally, of the height and build of Daniel Webster, with a noble head—a magnificent creature, mind and body.

I had the great pleasure of being the first person to convey to Mr. Ticknor, (cousin of Mr. Fields' partner and also a dear friend of mine) the first news of Mr. Macaulay's having selected his book on Spanish literature, when entreated by the Queen to recommend one to her, as the best that had appeared for many years.

Then I have had Mr. Bennoch, a common council-man of London, who the day before had received and introduced Kossuth at the Guildhall. Kossuth told him that years ago he taught himself English in an Austrian prison with only three books, Shakspeare, the Bible, and a Hungarian dictionary. His speaking is said to be something wonderful for raciness and diction; that when he comes to a pause he coins some word that will become English from its felicity, so that people listen without perceiving the length of his harangues. I take leave to think him a humbug who says one thing one day and another the next in order to please his audience, and who came here for two motives, to excite so much enthusiasm as might provide a Kossuth fund, and to stir up the people to go to war that he might take his chance to gain something in the scramble. He has succeeded in

attracting an immense number of followers, but I doubt his getting the money, and am pretty sure that he will fail in the war speculation.

Mr. Fields says that in America such is the appetite for novelty and charlatanism, that he should not wonder if they found out that he was born in the States, and made him President. Only he'll get no money there. Tell me, you who are nearer, what you think of this adventurer? I have a great hatred to the people who for interested motives profane the great name of freedom. Besides I have not forgiven his abuse of Louis Napoleon in that inflammatory letter of his at Marseilles. What do you think of *him* at this moment? Mrs. Browning, who is in Paris, says that he is fully expected to be re-elected. She saw him alight from his carriage in the court-yard of an hotel the other day, and he got out laughing and with some difficulty, for it was filled up to his waist with nosegays and petitions flung in through the open windows. She tells me that George Sand is living at her chateau in Berry; the house full of her own friends and her son's who rehearse her new dramas before they are offered to the theatres. I cried my eyes out over Claudie. Certainly she has conquered a new kingdom. Her son is a common-place young man of three-and-twenty, but fond of his mother.

I hear that the Brownings have had a grand success at Paris. No. I have only messages backward and forward from Alfred Tennyson; we have

never met. I don't believe he talks well, but he is kindly and amiable—only that smoking! Neither does Mr. Kingsley talk well; between his stammering and his discursiveness there is no getting on with him: we have not met yet, but I hear this on all hands. Miss Bremer was at his house lately for a few hours, and if she could have staid half a day longer we should have met at a mutual friend's; as it was, nothing passed but mutual lamentations. People speak well of her, as unaffected and pleasing.

I have just been reading "Le Collier de la Reine," by Dumas, which has much interest, as those historical mysteries always have. Tell me about your book. Adieu, dear friend.—Ever faithfully yours,

M. R. MITFORD.

I am expecting every day a visit from one of the most remarkable old ladies in England, Lady Stanley of Alderley. She was the daughter of that Lord Sheffield who edited Gibbon's works and wrote his life, and in that correspondence is a remarkable letter of hers, sixty years ago or more. She trots about the house now, like her contemporary Mrs. Hughes, from six in the morning till eleven at night, and is just as young in mind as in body. She calls herself my neighbour at thirteen miles off, and at this time of year! Where am I to send your copy of my book?

Swallowfield,
January 21, 1852.

I HAVE escaped, through urgent business, seeing Edward Lytton's play. Dickens and his troop came to Reading to act it on that very night, and civilly reserved me a ticket and a seat till the last; but I had not completed my labour till half-past seven o'clock when I was forced to send in to Reading to save the post, and was far too much exhausted to think of play-going. The miss of the dramatic affair was a great escape. Only fancy the thing lasting from eight o'clock till near two. My neighbours, the Russells, did not get home with their blood horses until twenty minutes after two, and they are never forty minutes or thirty-five coming from Reading, being nearer than I am. I have always observed that amateurs of all kinds never weary of hearing themselves, but in this case the audience were tired to death; for except Dickens in the farce, all was wretched.

Since then my kind neighbours have been in great trouble. You will, of course, have seen an account of the terrible loss of the new steamer, "The Amazon," by fire. One of the passengers aboard her was Eliot Warburton, author of "The Crescent and the Cross." If you know that charming book you will remember the part "R." plays in it; indeed his mind is reflected throughout the work, especially in the first volume. Well, this friend and fellow traveller was young Henry Russell, Sir Henry's

eldest son, one of those fine spirits who are pretty sure to pass away early. He is dead of consumption, and the loss of his favourite friend in this deplorable manner has renewed all their grief. They speak of Mr. Warburton as even more remarkable for temper, character, conduct, and conversation than for his high literary power. So generous, high-spirited, and unselfish that he was sure to stay till all women and children and old men were saved, although no life could be more valuable than his own, for he had married a sweet woman of high family and small fortune, and had two young children entirely dependent on his exertions. What is worse, he was sent on a semi-official mission which he was certain to have executed so admirably as to ensure future employment. He may yet be saved, but there is little hope of it.

I continue delighted with my house, although the over-work of the correction of the press and this damp weather have tried me a good deal. At the other house I should have died of the two. They have taken down the outbuildings on either side, and you never saw anything so miserable as what is left. I think it will fall down altogether.

You are quite right about my neighbours. I am here among people of a high class, and they treat me as if I were a greater lady than themselves, respecting my ways and habits, and contriving in every way to make all pleasant to me.

Is not Louis Napoleon a fine fellow? I have no

patience with our press for trying to drive our weak and ungracious ministry into measures that may force him into war—a war which every letter from France says would be so popular with army and people, and for which we are so entirely unprepared.

Mrs. Browning says that Paris was with him from the first to the last, so say three or four other friends of mine, who have been there since the autumn. Mrs. Browning says that the courage and activity shown in the *coup d'état* have never been surpassed. She tells some capital stories of Emile de Girardin, and says that the Prince says of himself, that his life will have had four phases—one all rashness and imprudence, necessary to make his name known, and to make his own faults known to himself; the next the combat with, and triumph over, anarchy; the third the consolidation of France and pacification of Europe; the last *un coup de pistolet.* The passion of parties is so excited, that the only thing which renders the last improbable is the sort of fate by which men of that very high and calm courage often escape dangers by braving them.

Is not Kossuth an intolerable firebrand? I don't think his popularity will last long, either here or in America. A friend of mine writes me from London that his little boy (a child of eight years old), being at a twelfth-night party, drew the king. "Ah, le Roi!" cried the boy. "Je ne veux pas être Roi! Ils sont tous des Tyrans!" His parroting begins early.

Mrs. Browning says it is certain that Dumas' four

hundred or five hundred volumes are all written by his own hand, like the Prince President's decrees. I always thought they were, by the odour of Dumas sprinkled over them. He is only helped by notes collected and reading done. He is said to be a kind, good-natured, thoughtless person, a negro child—in debt at this moment; one who, if he wanted bread, would spend his last napoleon in buying a pretty cane instead of food.

I have just now a very fine racy poem by Longfellow, "The Golden Legend," breathing of Germany, and quaint old towers and grand cathedrals, and all the pageantry of the Middle Ages, full of local colour. I don't know that it will be popular, but in my mind it leaves all that he has done a million of miles behind. I know no living poet who could have written it. There is an out-of-door sermon which one can fancy preached at Paul's Cross before the Reformation.

God bless you! dear friend. Tell me what is thought of Louis Napoleon in Germany. Remember you owe me two letters now.

Yours ever,
M. R. MITFORD.

Swallowfield,
March 17, 1852.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—

My book has been waiting I cannot tell how long for a safe conveyance to London. Week by week, almost day by day, I have been expecting

that excellent and most trusty man of business, Mr. Bennett. He has already four children, and may have a dozen more. By the way, I have lost two dear friends lately in childbed, one of them Mrs. Praed (wife of a London banker, and sister-in-law of the poet), of her ninth, the other, a Cameron of Lochiel, of her twenty-second child! the last expected to die. Mrs. Praed, a lovely woman of thirty-two, wrote to me in the highest spirits the day before her confinement. Mr. May says that the number of deaths in this way this winter exceeds any since the year the Princess Charlotte died, so that the medical men do not talk of the matter.

Poor Mrs. Eliot Warburton is in the family way. She clings to the hope that her husband is still alive; and his brothers, although confident there is no such chance, encourage the belief until after her confinement, so very terrible was the first effect of the news upon her. She was for some time quite frantic. A curious circumstance about the "Amazon" is the manner in which a dash of superstition saved the life of Lord Sheffield. He had paid for his passage, but forfeited it because the vessel sailed on a Friday.

I hope you will like my book. I never wrote any one that produced so many letters from friends and strangers. I think that I have not received less than fifteen to twenty a day, many of them from persons of the very highest accomplishment, several

of whom will, I feel, be friends. It seems to please those best whom one most wishes to please, the true lovers of literature. But you must not expect a biography. It is rather a book of criticism mingled with a good deal of anecdote and little bits of personal gossip, which people like chiefly, I think, on account of the style, and which you will like from old kindness. I have also quantities of books. One volume of poems, published under the name of Mary Maynard, is of singular beauty, and must make its way after the usual probation. By the way, she has sent me some MS. translations of your favourite poet, Uhland, which are exquisite. I never read translations so like originals in harmony and vigour. One, of the noble ballad Tailliefer, is especially fine. Between ourselves, Mary Maynard is not her name. So far she has told me, although the true name I do not know. Her own family are ignorant of her having published, which has been done on the persuasion of our dear friend, John Ruskin, who is now at Venice, finishing his "Stones." I find by a letter from another friend (James Fields, the American now at Rome), that our laureate has left behind him some curious stories in Italy. He quitted Florence because he could not get any good tobacco!

Mrs. Browning has become acquainted with Madame Sand, and is charmed with her simplicity and nobleness; very quietly dressed, of the most unpretending manners, and not a cigarette to be seen! While the English papers were saying that

she was exiled by Louis Napoleon, she came to Paris to solicit from him a commutation of sentence for her friend Marc Dufraisse! He received her with the greatest kindness, shook hands with her, and granted her request.

The worst news I have to give you is my lameness. I staid in that damp house too long; still, I was getting better day by day. Then came a glut of rain, and the rheumatism seized my knees and ancles. Now we have east wind and frost, which is as bad. Mr. May prohibits the pony chaise, which I have not entered for nearly three months, and can hardly walk at all. I cannot stand upright—go quite double—and Sam is forced to lift me from step to step to get up-stairs. Mr. May says that warm weather will set all to rights, but when warm weather will come, heaven knows. There is not a sign of spring in field or hedgerow; not a bird on the trees, or a primrose in the flowery lanes. The only symptom of the season is a little shepherd boy, who drives his pretty flock of ewes and lambs to water, at a ford opposite my window. To be sure Mr. Bennett is coming, who always brings rain. Heaven bless you! dear friend. We continue equally delighted with the house.

Ever faithfully and affectionately yours,

M. R. MITFORD.

Fanchon and K. desire their duty.

May 20, 1852.

Thank you, my very dear friend, for your most kind and welcome letter. Thank you for liking my book. It has several times been reprinted in America, where it is by far more popular than anything I ever wrote, and Galignani has just reprinted it at Paris. Every day I get books upon books, and from ten to twenty letters about it from all sorts of people, and all places. Only yesterday the wife of President Sparkes (the head of the great American College of Cambridge, near Boston) wrote to me to beg me to come with Sam and K., and Fanchon, and the pony, and live three or four years with her and her husband; and really this is only a specimen of the enthusiasm created.

Another thing you will be glad to hear. Mr. Bentley took the same fancy for a portrait that you have long had, so Mr. Lucas came down here and has made a marvellous work of art—a portrait as like as that of my dear father, and far more wonderful considering the materials he had to work on. It is an oval of the size of life. The head finished like a miniature, the rest more slightly painted; but the thing is a wonder of truth and ideality. The expression sweet, and calm, and happy—looking not as I suppose I ever do—but as one might fancy it just possible I might do

when thinking of some one whom I loved. A vulgar painter would have fallen into the trap of over animation, which in an old woman especially is dangerous, but Mr. Lucas has exquisite taste. It is now in the hands of the engraver; so is a miniature taken when I was between three and four years old, which is likely to be engraved by two artists. I think I can promise you a copy of this. I have promised Mr. Lucas to sit for another portrait—a full length—in his own studio, where of course the light will be much better than in my little parlour. All this sounds as if I were well, but I continue so lame that I am forced to be lifted in and out of the pony chaise, and from step to step up-stairs at night, and I feel so heavy and helpless that I seem to cumber the earth.

The east wind after staying with us for ten weeks has at last changed, and we have leaves on the trees, and nightingales in the woods, and the wandering bird from which this pretty place takes its name, has appeared over our pools and our bright river. I like our little house more and more, although I have lost the kind and accomplished friend and neighbour who so worthily filled the mansion where Lord Clarendon wrote his history. The family, however, remain, and I trust that I shall not lose the charming young woman—poor Sir Henry's eldest daughter, who is my chief companion. She is a great admirer of the Presi-

dent, although not quite so fervent as I am. Mrs. Browning too is quite carried away by his ability. She sent me word that Madame Sand (with whom she had become well acquainted) went to him to beg the release of some of Les Rouges, and commutation of sentence for others. He granted her request, spoke to her in the kindest manner, shook hands with her, and said at parting—"Vous verrez, vous serez contente de moi."—"Et vous," she replied, "vous serez content de moi." I firmly believe that he is the greatest man since the Emperor.

I cannot thank you enough for all that you have told me of him and the Countess Stephanie's family. Was not Count Tascher de la Pagerie a nephew of the Empress Josephine? I think I remember reading of him as a young man serving under the Emperor, going through all the grades, and looked after rather more than less strictly for the connection which was affectionately recognised in private. There is nothing more remarkable in the fine, heroic character of Louis Napoleon, than the attachment he shows to all old connexions, and the way in which he recognises and returns twenty-fold all kindnesses shown to him in his unprosperous days. I am expecting every day a visit from my friend Mr. Fields, who has passed the last month in Paris, and been at all the balls and fêtes in virtue of his intimacy with the American consul, whose family

he has accompanied everywhere. He is to bring me all that he can pick up of portraits, biographies, works, and speeches, &c.,—I dare say fifty books at least,—having as the great publisher of America, connexions with all the chief booksellers of Paris. He says that none of the portraits do justice to that pale, earnest face, so full of deep feeling,—that it is completely the face of a man of genius, and of sensibility; the calm being of course that sensibility strongly repressed.

If I write another book I shall certainly give an article to him, for the injustice done to him by English newspapers and English books, is revolting. It is only amongst high natures that one meets with his advocates. Old Lady Stanley, of Alderley, is one.

How I rejoice that your book is coming out! I feel sure of its success. The charm of Bath to me, at least the principal charm, was Prior Park, where I passed most of my time with the fascinating Bishop Baines, who died the succeeding year. He was the head of the English Catholics, and would have prevented their subsequent false steps had he lived—knowing the national character well. God bless you, dear friend. Continue to talk to me of Louis Napoleon and yourself.—Ever yours,

M. R. MITFORD.

Swallowfield, July 19, 1852.

My Dear Friend,

Your kind letter found me confined to my bed, with a violent attack of fever, from which—after a severe illness of nearly a month—I am just recovering. I have not been well since Christmas, and indeed for two or three years I have been failing much. I lived too long in that miserable cottage. If I had been there now I should have died; but here I have the coolest house possible, seated upon a little ascent which seems to catch every breeze, and yet shaded by fine old trees from the sun, free from dust and noise, looking upon cool water and green fields, and with the best and kindest neighbours in the world. Lady Russell, who had not been beyond her park gates since her husband's death till my illness called her, comes every night to see me with her daughters—sweet young women—so that it is like a sister and nephews and nieces; and, besides, all the rest of the people are full of attention. So is dear Mr. May, so are K., and Sam, and at last I am getting better, but very slowly. Indeed, dear friend, I do feel for you in the loss of Madame de Bonstetten. I can conceive nothing more dreary than the loneliness of a great house.

I do hope that your book will be very successful, and give you pleasure and profit in one. Since I have been ill I have been reading Mr. Hawthorne's

new romance (not, I believe, even yet published). I read it in the actual copy, that when I had done it went to the author, and was the first sight he had of his own thoughts in print. It is called "The Blythedale Romance," and is a book of the present state of New England; full of beautiful writing, with a grand tragic construction, and one or two scenes of great power and passion; nevertheless, to me there is a want of reality; the characters are too exceptional, and an honest old farmer, who has nothing to do with the story, and is not mentioned half-a-dozen times, is the only person I like, simply because he is flesh and blood.

I have charming letters from Mr. Hawthorne, so entirely unspoilt, and from dear Dr. Holmes (my pet of all, whose poems are reprinted here in consequence of my book), and from most of their other worthies, and dear Mr. Fields means to take little Henry into his own great house at Boston. We are to send him to America when he is fourteen, or rather his mother is, whether I live or die, so he is nobly provided for, thank heaven!

These are pleasant things: on the other hand I have lost one of the friends whom I had learnt to love most fondly—Mrs. Robert Dering. We had never met, although her charming sister, Miss Shee (they are sisters of Sir George Shee, who is, I think, our ambassador at Stuttgardt, certainly an ambassador somewhere), a most charming woman, had come to see me. With Mrs. Dering I had only

corresponded, but never in my life read letters so full of a sweet and winning affectionateness, of personal charm—a charm like the scent of flowers—(you will find something of this in her poem called "Church Services," in my book). She was in the prime of life, happy as a wife, and mother of one hopeful son. She had not been well, and the last letter I had from her was in pencil. Then came the news that she was dead. Amongst other kindnesses she had sent me some exquisite climbing roses from Hertfordshire, to clothe the front of my house. Now her flowers are blossoming under my windows, and she is gone!

Just before my illness I had a visit from two ladies from Paris. One of them, a splendid old woman of seventy-six, had known my father and mother before their marriage, had been present at their wedding, had been trusted—herself a child of eleven—to hold the baby, and had never seen any of us after we moved from Alresford. You may imagine how much she was struck and interested when she met in my book with notices of all the places and people whom she remembered so well. She was full of life and enthusiam and went away, promising to come and spend a day with me next summer. She is far more likely to see next summer than I am! The Brownings are in London. The Ruskins are also expected here from Venice this week. This is all I know, dear friend, and much for a sick woman. God bless you!

Write me anything you hear of Louis Napoleon. I have been reading his works, which I got in 3 vols. from Paris. How very beautiful some of them are, especially the narrative of the Strasburg affair in a letter to his mother. By this it appears he was engaged to his cousin the Princess Mathilde, now the wife of Count Anatole Demidoff. Do read them. There is also a little bit upon exile and a preface to his history of Artillery, which are most interesting. Also I have a fine bust of him and another of Beranger, brought me by Mr. Fields, and two memoirs of Louis Napoleon. He is a really great man. Do you know Emilie Carlen's novels? "The Birthright," has been well translated by a young lady whom I know, one of the richest heiresses in England, Miss Percy, of Guy's Cliff. Adieu once again.

Ever faithfully yours,
MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

Swallowfield,
Sept. 26, 1852.

THANK you heartily, my very dear friend, for your most kind and welcome letter, especially for all that you tell me of Louis Napoleon. What a romance it is! and how completely he justifies my predilection! I know you will always tell me any authentic stories of this great man, and of her who is to be, or is not to be, his wife. She seems fit to take place at his side, and yet I am not sure that a well-educated, healthy, handsome French girl might not do just as well. One

has a prejudice against princesses out of Germany ever since Marie Louise, and I dislike the marriage of relations, although in this instance not near. However, Providence has worked admirably for him hitherto, aided by that first and rarest of his faculties, which has through life turned every misfortune and difficulty to account, making of his prison the best college, and letting the enmities and distractions of the National Assembly conduct to the salvation of France on the 2nd of December. Thank you for all you have told me again and again.

Now you will ask to know of me. I am much better, although the low fever which prostrated me in the summer comes and goes, and will not be entirely vanquished. But even that has its bright side. You have heard, of course, of William Harness, the celebrated London preacher, and still more celebrated talker? He has been the chosen friend of all that is eminent for the last half century, ever since he was a boy at Harrow, where Lord Byron contracted the love for him that made him offer him the dedication of the "Childe Harold."

Well, about six weeks ago he heard how ill I had been and still continued, and came to see me; and finding me even more changed than he expected, he resolved to establish himself close by and take care of me. Accordingly, in a few days, he left Deepdene and Mr. Hope's delightful conversation, came to Swallowfield, hunted up a lodging, and spent three weeks with no other purpose or employment. Nothing could be

more judicious than his way of going on. He never made his appearance at my cottage till two o'clock, when we drove out together. Then he went to his lodgings to dinner, partly not to give trouble, but chiefly to give me two or three hours of perfect rest. At eight he and the Russells came to tea, and he read Shakespeare till bed time. He is by very far the finest reader I ever heard, and no pleasure can be higher than hearing that greatest of poets so rendered. Under this pleasant treatment no wonder that I improved. The Hopes too came to spend a morning here,—the accomplished and elegant gentleman who bears the weight of eighty thousand a year, with most delightful simplicity and unaffectedness, and who is that rare thing a son worthy in taste and talent of a most distinguished father,—the pretty, pleasant, French wife, and the lovely little girl (now about nine years old, as light and buoyant as a bird) who will be the richest heiress in England. Never was a child more admirably trained, so that in her case one hopes she may escape the evils of a destiny full of danger.*

My admirable friend has left me now, but he is to return in November, having even retained his lodgings, and I have been occupied with a series of visitors ever since. Last week we had three parties, arriving at two o'clock and staying till the last train. Two of my guests were Mr. Holloway, the printseller,

* The present Duchess of Newcastle.

and his very nice and clever wife. I tell you of them because I know that you will be pleased to hear their errand. Mr. Dillon, one of our merchant princes, whose collection of engravings would sell, they say, for £60,000, and is one of the finest private collections in the world, has commissioned Mr. Holloway to illustrate a copy of my "Recollections" at an unlimited expense, to spare nothing for the purpose, but to render it as perfect as money can make it. Now Mr. Holloway is celebrated for these luxuries of the library; he has achieved such triumphs before, so that Mr. Dillon (as he well knows) will have all that taste and skill and experience can bring to the aid of his own munificent order.

Mr. Holloway says that it will be the most magnificent copy of any modern book. The Recollections are to be let into seven or eight quarto volumes, and he brought in the first volume to show me. Such a collection of gems of art I never beheld. The rarest and finest portraits, often many of one person and always the rarest and the best, ranging from the noble minds of our great old poets, from the Charles's and the Cromwells, to George Faulkner (of whom, by the way, none was thought to exist, until this copy turned up accidentally in a supplementary volume of Lord Chesterfield); the most curious old prints of old houses—one, for instance, taken some two hundred years ago, (I think before the siege) of Donnington Castle, and besides the print the very identical drawing from which that print was made. Nothing can go beyond

this. Beautiful modern drawings, by living artists, sent expressly to the spots that I mention,—you would recognise much of the scenery where we have walked together;—scarce and characteristic autographs—a very fine one of Pope,—nothing is too odd for Mr. Holloway. There is a full length portrait of George III. in colours, so like that the old king seems really alive—not a caricature, but almost producing the effect of one by the perfection with which the peculiarities are hit off. You may imagine that this is very gratifying. The number of proper names and names of places of course had something to do with the choice (as I hear that two other persons are illustrating the book in a less elaborate manner), but a liking for the writer as a writer, (for, personally, I am acquainted with none of them), has its full share. It is the only work which Mr. Dillon has ever thought of illustrating, and will live alone amongst his magnificent engravings.

Yesterday I had my dear friend Mr. Bennoch with two artists; one of London, the other (Mr. Thompson) from America. The London artist is about to realise a fancy of mine, and to paint the signing of the letter to William the Third in the crypt of Lady Place, you will find my idea of it in the chapter on Mr. Noel. He is a young man, very modest, but Mr. Bennoch says very full of talent. Mr. Bennoch is another of our merchant princes, a man of great talent, a fine speaker, and true poet, who will, they say, some day or other represent the City, and who, having no child, spends

his large fortune in goodnesses and kindnesses. I have not seen the Brownings, though they talk of coming. Poor Lady Lovelace is dying of internal cancer, suffering martyrdom. The Duke has really left no will, only a few memoranda. This is certain, in spite of the newspapers. The new Duke told it to Mr. ———. The article in "The Times" was written by Macaulay, but by far the best character of the old Duke is a very noble poem in "Punch." The poor people here tremble for their work, for the Duke employed largely. I fear for the trees: nobody can guess how Lord Douro will turn out. I suppose nobody ever succeeded to a large property at the age of forty-five of whom so little was known in his own place. He is handsome and exemplary but cold.

When is the "Chamois Shooting" to come out? There is a great dearth of striking books. I have been much interested lately by the production, only last week, of an oratorio called "Jerusalem," at the Norwich Festival. The composer, Mr. Henry Pearson, who has lived for the last twelve years in Germany, and is married to a German lady, is the brother of the person whom, next to the Russells, I love best hereabouts, the Rev. Hugh Pearson, Vicar of Sunning, that choice thing a lover of poetry, and a thorough man of letters, who is no author.

The Oratorio was a complete ovation, so far as the audience was concerned, and appears from the critiques to be a work of real genius, but startling from

its novelty. He will take a great place among musicians. Adieu, dear Mr. Boner. Say everything for me to your sister, and believe me,

Ever faithfully yours,

M. R. MITFORD.

Swallowfield, Jan. 6, 1853.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I WAS just wondering that I did not hear from you, and hoping very sincerely that no illness or misfortune of any kind had caused your silence. I rejoice to find that it has arisen from other causes, and having myself suffered so much from being hurried through the press, am tempted to congratulate you upon a slowness which will almost certainly be for the good of your book. Thank you very much for your kind wishes. Ah! I want them much, for I am in very evil plight. Last Monday fortnight, nearly three weeks ago, I was thrown violently out of my little pony chaise on the hard road in Lady Russell's park. No bone was broken, but such was the shock to the system, that ten days after the accident Mr. May could not satisfy himself that there was neither fracture nor dislocation without a most minute and searching re-examination; and I am at this moment writing to you with my left arm bound tightly to my body, and without the possibility of raising either foot from the ground. I am lifted into bed, lifted out of bed, and have not the power of making the slightest change of posture. Mr. May says

that the case will be long, but that he has reason to hope and believe I shall regain my former state, such as it was, for if I had not been very feeble and very rheumatic, this accident would have been much less serious.

In the midst of all this, K., who has been married to Sam for above a twelvemonth, has been confined with a little girl. So much for the evil—the good is, that the two parts of me thoroughly uninjured are the head and the right hand, and that Sam has been a real treasure in this affair, lifting me about with a tenderness, a handiness, and a power that no woman could have, and superintending a giddy young maid and a stupid old nurse after a fashion that nobody would believe without seeing. Lady Russell has walked up every day through the dirt and the rain like a real sister. I have seen nobody but the Russells and Mr. May till to-day, but I suppose I must begin to let in one or two friends now, so that upon the whole I am mending.

Now to other things. I think I told you that Hawthorne was writing a new romance, but it bids fair to be interrupted, for by a packet just received from America, I find that the new President Pierce was his class-fellow at college, and has been for the last year or two his neighbour at Concord (where Emerson also lives), that they are in communication every day, and that there is no doubt but Hawthorne will be called to high office as soon as his friend takes possession of the presidential chair. Three

years ago he was starving. All my correspondents say that no European can even imagine the scramble for place and the dirty intrigues that take place every four years in the model republic. Wise were the French to consolidate their government and to choose the really great man now at their head, to plan for them large measures and wise ameliorations. I rejoice in all that he has done, and think the Princess Mathilde a great simpleton to desert a man of genius for a mere common young prince. For my part, I am not sorry that he has lost her. There is madness in her father's blood, and health of mind and body is above all what he should seek. His own bodily health, I hear, is not strong, and he regrets so much the garden of the Elysée, that even now the Parisians think him likely to return thither. In spite of the magnificence which surrounds him, his own tastes are as simple as his uncle's. A friend of mine who saw his private apartments at St. Cloud, just as they had been fitted up under his own direction this summer, told me that he never saw such an absence of finery or luxury. It was all in the severest simplicity and the most perfect taste. He is a great man, and pre-eminently manly in every way.

Of course you have seen our calamities in the way of ministers. Henry Drummond (the very odd and very clever member for Surrey—you know whom I mean)—who is a great friend of Disraeli, says that he certainly broke a blood-vessel at the beginning

of the session, and that there was not three months' life left in him if he had had to stand the worrying of so strong an opposition,—so the loss of place has saved him.

I heard yesterday from Miss Goldsmid that the Jew Bill is sure to be carried now. Many circumstances have helped—the Duke's death, the coalition ministry. The prospect has revived her father, who was dying of heart complaint. I trust he will live to see the measure carried. It has been the labour of his life, for he was the real working man of the movement. Every citizen has a claim to his civil rights, were he Mahomedan or Hindoo. Everybody seems to hope that this ministry may stay in: nothing is so bad as perpetual change, and the important question of the colonies will, at all events, have the benefit of Sir William Molesworth's advice, although it be not his department.

Within this month I have had several applications from Mr. Bentley for a second series of my "Recollections." I suppose if I recover sufficiently that I must try. Should I attempt another series I shall devote some chapters to French literature. Do you know the delicious ballads of Casimir Delavigne? I have been collecting them for two or three years, and was pleased and astonished to see two of them quoted in the "Memoirs of Alexandre Dumas." You know that the author never seems to have guessed at their value,

that very few are printed among his "Poésies," and that they are scattered here and there, set to music, and what not. I wish if you meet with any you would send them to me. I particularly want one of which the refrain is, "Chez l'Ambassadeur de France,"* but any will be welcome upon the chance of my not having it. Tell Madame de Bonstetten how much obliged to her I am for her kind recollection. Remember me to her and to your sister. Is the Princess happy? Are both those young girls happily married? It must be an anxiety to those who have been the foster mothers of their minds. And how are your young men turning out? They have quoted my article on "Webster" in nearly every paper in the United States, and I have heard with great pleasure that of the many things written about him, it was the one that most gratified his family. Mr. Fields sent me an exquisite monody on that great statesman, and I really believe it to be his own, worth all that has been written on the Duke a million times over. The new duke has never signed his title yet. He still writes "Douro."

Queen Victoria sent my friend Miss Skerrett to Germany this autumn to see the Baroness Lehzen. She is living in an independent principality in the midst of the kingdom of Hanover. Nobody likes "Esmond." The love-story is detestable, and

* Miss Mitford alludes to that beautiful, terrible poem, "La Toilette de Constance."—EDITOR.

besides that, it is long and tedious. I demur, too, to the criticism; holding, with Hazlitt, that Steele was worth a thousand Addisons, and Bolingbroke by far the finest prose writer of them all. The last volume of the "Stones of Venice" will be finished in March—finer than the first. God bless you, dear friend. With every good wish of the season, and of every season,

I am always yours,
M. R. MITFORD.

Swallowfield,
January 27, 1853.

I HAVE to thank you, dear friend, for your most welcome letter, and not only for the letter but for the great kindness of sending me Casimir Delavigne's ballad. I have "La Mort du Bandit," "Le Conclave," "L'Ame de Purgatoire," "Le Gondolier," "Neria," and the charming one of which the refrain is "O Vierge Marie, pour moi priez Dieu." "Le Chien du Louvre" I have not, and shall be most thankful for it, so I shall for any others that you may receive from your correspondents. The four pieces of my collection are in a little volume called "Œuvres Completes de Casimir Delavigne,—Poesies." Dumas underrates him—he was not of the romantic school, although his plays are worth Dumas twenty times over, and indeed worth every modern French dramatist except Victor Hugo, who would have been a splendid tragic writer if he had not carried contrast

and effect to such an excess. Also, can you get me any notice of that extraordinary satirist Auguste Barbier? I have his works. They seem to me quite tremendous in force and savageness, just what I suppose Juvenal to have been. Louis Philippe bought him off, I believe, and then he attempted other poetry with less success. He is just a man to give specimens of, if one can find any admissible; but what is become of him? I should have expected him, if he had been still alive, to have come out rampant in Ledru Rollin's time, but surely one should have heard of him? at all events he is a prodigious "puller down of kings;" and of everything else. Do you know anything of a writer of Chansons—Dupont? "Le drole des droles" my correspondent called him, and if it be drole proper tant mieux, but if drole improper tant pis. Perhaps the most likely is that he is like Beranger, much wrong, and some blameless; in that case I shall get him. Forgive all this trouble, dear friend. Some of Alfred de Musset is pretty I think, but I have only one collection from 1840 to 1849. Is there any worth having before or since? And are any of the women good? I have Mad. Tastu, two series, and some of her things are I think of considerable merit, especially the garden scene in Romeo and Juliet, which comes nearer Shakespeare than I ever thought any French translation could do; also I think Mde. E. de Girardin's "Ecole des Journalistes" clever, especially with the piquant letter of Jules Janin calling her "mon beau

confrère,"—do you remember?—are any of her other things good?

Now to come to my Emperor. How charmed I am with this marriage, the finest homage ever paid to woman and to love, and how more than charmed with the speech in which he announced it; so sudden, so unexpected, so condensed, so full of bold and truthful appeal to common human feeling! The paragraph where he speaks of Josephine, where he claims the title of Parvenu, where he speaks of his destined wife as "the woman whom I love and whom I respect," all these go straight to our best sympathies, and *there* has always been his strength and the real proof of his genius. There are little passages in the three volumes of his published works which have the same touch. Mr. Bennoch pointed out to me to-day in a letter written from Lord Middleton's fine place in Nottinghamshire, that there was almost a prophecy of his doings in my Rienzi, in the third act where the citizens are talking of him:

First Citizen. "Will he dare?"
Second. "Dare! Why, thou saw'st his spirit. Now his power
Watches his will, and never lineal prince
Sate firmer on the throne, or lightlier swayed
The reins of empire. He hath swept away
The oppressors and extortioners; hath won
Kingly allies, hath reconciled the Pope,
Hath quelled the Barons."

God grant him a long and happy reign! Your friend, the Countess Stephanie, must enjoy his

triumph. For my part I look upon this marriage as the finest thing he has done. To give to mutual affection, to honest preference the place hitherto held by a miserable conventional prejudice; to release kings and princes, not only from domestic coldness or domestic misery, but from the frightful consequences of these inter-marriages to their innocent offspring, from scrofula and epilepsy, from madness and idiotism. I earnestly trust that the example will be followed. I have the "Homes of American Authors," a nice book, and very snugly housed they are. I am waiting anxiously for your book. Ever most faithfully yours.

Feb. 1. To-day, dear friend, came two more charming lyrics of Casimir Delavigne. Thank you again and again.

March 20, 1853.

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I saw the other day a letter from a stiff English lady, who had been visiting one of the new Empress's ladies of honour, who told her that her Majesty shot thirteen brace of partridges one morning at St. Cloud, adding—"in spite of that, she is so sweet and charming a creature that any man might fall in love with her." I like all that I hear of her, but nothing better than the way in which Mrs. Browning sums up her character, "As brave as a lion, and as true as a dog."

Now let me thank you over and over for Casimir.

"Le Chien du Louvre" is indeed a *chef d'œuvre*, and so is the drinking song. Thank you a thousand times. Never was anything more against me than this weather. Yesterday morning I was awakened by a tremendous noise, which proved to be men with axes breaking the ice to water the horses before going to Reading market. We have snow every day, and, in short, Christmas weather at Easter.

Your book has not yet arrived, but I cannot bear the ungrateful look of keeping silence longer. Be quite sure I will do all I can for it by recommending it in all quarters, and I hope to review it in my "Second Series." I find that the influence of these volumes has been great:—Dr. Holmes has been reprinted in consequence, so has Holcroft, and, they tell me, two or three other books; and Whittier and Hawthorne both say that I have done more for their reputation than all the rest of the critics put together—and that not only in England but in America. Longfellow, I understand, says the same. My article on David Webster was reprinted in nearly every newspaper in the States, and his family sent me word, that of all that had been written on him it gave them the most pleasure. Mr. Fields tells me that their house at Boston sent this Christmas for a thousand copies of Bohn's edition of "Our Village," in spite of the many editions of all sorts published in America; and I have just corrected "My Recollections" for a cheaper edition—the first having been enormous. I say all these vain things, dearest

friend, just to prove that I may hope to be of some use to you hereafter, if I be well enough to bring out a second series.

I have just been looking over a charming little work, three ballads by the *soi-disant* Mary Maynard, called the "Heart of Montrose" (do you know that strange romantic story in the "Life and Times of Montrose?")—and a novel, not yet printed, by Mrs. Acton Tindal, which bids fair to be full of life; also Mr. Justice Talfourd's new tragedy, "The Castilian," printed, but not published; although, as Moxon's name is in the title-page, and the "not published" merely written with a pen, I presume he means to bring it out some time or other. At present, to quote a very affectionate letter which accompanied it, "it is a very private sin," having only been given to eight or ten people in London, and nobody except myself in Berkshire; indeed he waited till he got to Oxford before he sent it to me. The subject is historical—a revolt of the Castilians of Toledo, under John de Padilla, in the early part of the reign of Charles V. It is very like "Ion," much more so than the other tragedies; but as the character is, like his, full of scruples and sentiment, it bears little mark of the Castilian of the age between Cortes and Alva. Nevertheless it has much beauty. Very oddly, old Mariana, who gives so many traits for the drama, leaves off his history just before; so he has been forced to go to the far less picturesque pages of Prescott and Robertson. I doubt, though,

whether he knows the old Spaniard, of whom I have an old folio translation, almost as characteristic as Lord Berners' "Froissart."

Alfred Tennyson has published an amended edition of his poem on the Duke's death; but nothing written on that subject was to be compared with a magnificent monody on Daniel Webster, by Dr. Parsons, an American, who has written very little, but whose lines on a Print of Dante are said to be the finest thing that any American has produced, and that is saying much.

I heard to-day from Mrs. Browning. She is writing a new poem, and her husband is also busy with a new work. They are still at Florence, but will proceed to Rome and Naples, and arrive here in the summer, I suppose by sea. Adieu, my very dear friend. I am sure to like your book, and I shall write as soon after receiving it as I have an opportunity of sending to the post. Ever, dearest friend, very faithfully and affectionately yours,

M. R. MITFORD.

April 22, 1853.

I WRITE in post haste, dear friend, being obliged to send off at once to Reading. Owing to one thing or another, it is only two days since I received your beautiful book.* The delay however

* "Chamois Hunting in the Mountains of Bavaria."

enables me to say that the general reception has been most gratifying. The "Spectator," (certainly the best and most influential of our weekly critical papers) has been highly favourable, and so I really believe has been the whole press. Three people who were here during these two days, have said at once that they would order it in their book-clubs, and I have written and shall write about it to all quarters where I think it likely to do good; especially to Miss Skerrett to mention it to Prince Albert, whom it would certainly interest.

Now, in my opinion, it is a work of the highest merit; one which shows unaffectedly the character of the author more than any I almost ever read. Full of graphic detail, of novelty, and of interest, and exquisitely got up, fit for a drawing-room table and fit for a bookcase.

It must do you immense good in point of reputation. The only fault to my apprehension is that it is perhaps one fourth part too long. I say this only as a warning for the future, for the error (if it be one—perhaps it is only my fancy) lies in the original writing, in the spinning out dialogue a little too much where there is no immediate point of story or of character to be brought out. Perhaps tooth is fancy of mine is the result of my having just when I began your book, finished Mr. Kingsley's "Hypatia"—also a gift book—which is such a whirl of incident and passion. But *your* book, dear friend, is one to be very proud of—one that makes

me very proud of my friend and for my friend. All other sporting books have about them dashes of recklessness and vanity. In yours there is an evident truth: one trusts every word that you say. It would prepare the way for a work on German life and manners which I think would have a great success. I must write about it to Mr. Fields. I should like to see it well reprinted in America. I have just been writing to Lord John Russell, being thereunto compelled by circumstances. My friend, Dr. Holmes, recited at the end of a lecture on Byron and Moore, a very sweet poem to the memory of the latter, quite like one of Moore's very best. Well, he and another friend of mine Mrs. Sparks, wife of Jared Sparks, president of Harvard University, sent it to me to transmit to Lord John, to be by him transmitted to Mrs. Moore. I transcribe one stanza:

> "If in his cheek unholy blood
> Burned for one youthful hour,
> 'Twas but the flushing of the bud
> That bloomed a milkwhite flower.

I must write a longer letter another time. I am still a prisoner. Adieu, dear friend. Always most faithfully yours.

Swallowfield,
May 31, 1853.

I AM still a prisoner, dear friend, so that all I can tell you is that every one to whom I have

spoken or written of your book speaks of it in the highest terms, and that what I can hear of the reviews (and I have enquired more about that work than I ever did about any other) is most gratifying. To me the "Chamois Hunting" seems likely to be of great use to you permanently. It has the strong indelible stamp of a true and pure mind—of thorough gentility of thought and of habits—of a strong feeling for the picturesque and the beautiful, with a manliness not always found with these qualities, and with a scholarship kept down by the subject. I would leave this book as it is, unless by curtailing certain parts a little too much alike you could make room for a chapter on deer-stalking. Just read your own last fifty pages, which are infinitely more rapid and more varied than the rest, and you will see how in a future work (for my criticism was altogether prospective) you would gain by going at a somewhat quicker pace over the ground. But I did not mean in the slightest degree to find fault with this book, certainly the best of its sort I have ever read, but only, whilst the impression of a careful perusal was strong upon me, to suggest the only change that any one could wish in a manner full of good taste. Your sister has cause to be much gratified with such a book. God grant that the result may be what she and I most wish. Even if not immediate I feel that the good effect will be certain and permanent. It is *un fait accompli*, and will not fail to bear its fruits. I am sure that your German friends

must all like it. There is a high-bred simplicity from the first page to the last.

Is it since I wrote to you that I have had to transmit to Lord John Russell, for him to forward to Mrs. Moore, some lines on her husband's memory by Dr. Holmes, so like what Moore would himself have written that it is really marvellous? They were sent to me by Mrs. Sparks, and most graciously acknowledged by his Lordship.

Just after that came a packet from Mr. Fields containing no less than five presentation copies from different American writers (Whittier, Stoddart, &c.), one of them containing by very far the finest poem (by Dr. Parsons, also a physician at Boston) that has ever crossed the Atlantic. With them arrived three more volumes, making ten, of De Quincey's racy prose, and two numbers of a new magazine just set up in New York, one of them most curious for its accounts of the Rappings; about which the New York people seem to have gone mad, and another for a most singular history of a new claimant to the French crown, or rather to the Louis XVII. pretendership, who has just turned up among the Red Indians. If one did not know that whenever there is a demand for believers the supply is never wanting, one should wonder that some hundreds of thousands (Mrs. Browning included) have faith in the rapping imposture, and that several episcopal clergymen vouch for the false dauphin.

The book in fashion is a volume of poems by

Alexander Smith. A number of extracts from these poems were sent to me a year and a half ago, and this book is just like those extracts printed together without any sort of correction—a mass of powerful metaphor with scarce any lattice-work for the honeysuckles to climb upon—of the worst school too, the obscure and the unfinished, but he is young and may do better.

I have at last procured the ballad of which the refrain is "Chez l'ambassadeur de France." Thanks a thousand-fold for all your kindness. Adieu, dearest friend. I have been suffering much, but am again somewhat better. Ever most faithfully yours,

M. R. M.

I have written about your book to the palace.

July 6, 1853.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I begin by answering your kind questions about my health. The terrible want of power in the limbs which rheumatism began, and this bad accident has so grievously augmented, does not yield in the least to the change of season. They get me down step by step to the pony-chaise, and that getting down stairs is in itself a most painful, difficult, and tedious operation, and then I am driven at a foot pace through the lanes. If I attempt more I am so sore all over the body that for two or three days afterwards it is as if I had been pounded in a mortar, and company—the pleasanter the worse—

has exactly the same effect as a quick drive. Nothing does for me but absolute quiet. Still Mr. May thinks that the open air may make me a little stronger by and bye, and I am looking for an old-fashioned garden chair (not a Bath chair) in which I may be drawn under a tree during the warm afternoons. One bad effect of this weakness is that I see few people and write as few letters as I can help—for always I am tormented and pursued by quantities of persons who will write to me, persons whom I never saw or heard of, about their own books and their own poems. It was only yesterday that I received a modest request to edit a novel from a person who had no more right to ask me such a thing than she could have had to make the same request to you. Well, as I was about to say, one bad effect of this privacy is that I see few people to ask about your book. Young James Payn, a splendidly handsome lad of twenty-three, who used to be one of my means of hearing that sort of news, which gives tidings not merely of books but of their success, is gone to the Lakes to finish a volume of poems which will be very striking, and to try to regain his health, for he has been during the winter at death's door, and is exactly the charming lad that so often goes off in consumption—full of beauty mental and physical, and with a sensibility and grace of mind such as I have rarely known. He has been for three years at Trinity College, Cambridge, and his opinion about sending Alexan-

der Smith to the University is exactly mine. It is a place full of dangers. He may kill himself as Kirke White and Herbert Knowles did, by trying to overtake those who had the advantage of early training and a classical ground-work, seldom efficiently acquired after twenty; or he may join an idle set, or he may head a troop of admirers, blind idolaters, and lose all future power in self-admiration —perhaps this last destiny would be the most fatal to his talent of all. The healthiest thing for him would be a plunge into the business and bustle of life. My friend, Mr. Bennoch, the cleverest man that I have ever known, is at the head of a great commercial house, does every day the work of another man's year, will be in parliament whenever he likes, has already made a large fortune, and writes here and there in railway carriages, or anywhere, lyrical poetry that has nothing finer in the language, and this at forty-two or forty-three. He told me that your book had been well received, speaking generally; so did James Payn, so did Mr. Bennett, so did dear Mr. Pearson, instancing the "Spectator," a far more influential paper than the cold ungenial "Athenæum." My own opinion of it is fixed and unalterable. It is a little too long for this impatient age, and perhaps would have been more immediately popular if it had been more dashing and Cumming-like, and less true. But I defy any one to read it fairly without making acquaintance with a whole set of new scenes, new people,

and new manners; and this is just the effect that should be produced by such a subject; to say nothing of its development of the author's personal character.

I began this as soon as I received yours, but was interrupted, and it is now the 26th of June. When the weather lets me (for we have a wet, cold, showery summer), I sit at the corner of my little dwelling, under a superb acacia tree, laden just now with as many showy tassels as leaves. What a graceful tree the acacia is! waving its delicate foliage, and bending to every breeze like drooping feathers; just underneath it is a dark syringa, with its ivory blossoms—the English orange flower in look and in odour. You know, I believe, my love of sweet scents (I can even accept perfumes when I cannot get flowers), and can imagine how much I delight in this mingled fragrance of the syringa and the acacia. Almost all the very fragrant flowers are white—the violet, the narcissus, the cyclomen, the orange, the thousand fruit blossoms, the jessamine, the hyacinth, the Provence rose, the pink, the tuberose, the gardenia, the magnolia—oh, I could never be able to count them all. My love of fragrant flowers brought me last night a singular visitor.

When putting me to bed K. broke into a variety of exclamations, pointing all the while to the candlestick. Looking as she directed, I saw there a dark-looking caterpillar. It moved, and there was the reflection of a tiny green light. It was a glow-worm.

On the table were jars of pinks and roses, and there had been a jar of wild honeysuckle. Doubtless the insect had dropped from the flowers. After some consultation we extinguished the candle, and Sam deposited the candlestick on the turf in front of the house. Ten minutes after, the glow-worm had crawled to the grass, I hope to live out its little life in peace and comfort. Was it not strange? K., who knows my old love for those stars of the earth, says that now I cannot go to them they come to me.

You see the "Athenæum," I think, and will have doubtless been interested by Mr. Collier's curious annotated folio copy of Shakespeare, which he has almost traced to the old library at Upton Court. I wrote to him about a week ago to tell him that my friend Miss Ellen Cowslede, whose aunt, Mrs. Selwin (Christopher Smart's daughter) was so much with the old priest who lingered in the deserted mansion after everybody else had abandoned it, was the most likely person to tell him of the fate of the book. In his answer, which was most gracious, he told me that he had just lost one daughter by consumption, and another was given over with the same complaint. I think that terrible disease is prevailing more than ever. I heard the other day from Lady Richardson, wife of the Arctic traveller, and daughter of Mrs. Fletcher, Wordsworth's friend. Did you see her when at Rydal? I do not know her. Also the Baronesss Sternberg, who has a fine place on

Windermere, writes to me, and I heard the other day of Harriet Martineau, all neighbours. God bless you, dear friend.

Ever yours,

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

Swallowfield,
July 24, 1853.

THANK you again and again, my kind friend, for the deep interest you show in my health, and all the trouble you take to further my amendment. This year a journey to Wildbad is quite out of the question. If we had but a little dry weather, perhaps I might grow stronger; for it is total want of power that is my worst symptom, or, rather, my worst disease. They say that air is the best tonic for my case, and I get out when I can, but we have hardly had a dry day this summer, as the hay can tell. I have only once smelt that delicious odour of new hay, in spite of all the waggons that pass our house, and all the meadows through which we drive when we can get out. But there must be some change, and it can hardly fail of being for the better. What is likely to fix me here is this: my friend, Mr. Bennoch, has set his very heart and soul on my publishing a collected edition of my dramatic works —the plays and the dramatic scenes. Now three of these tragedies, never acted, had been sent to Colburn to be printed with some prose stories, originally in Finden's Tableaux some years ago. Any

day they might have been done, but I put it off, and now Colburn has retired from business. So I wrote a very humble letter, knowing that it was my fault, and asking if they had still the manuscripts, and would send them to Mr. Bennoch. The next day Colburn called, and told Mr. Bennoch that he had reserved an interest in two or three works, this especially, and then Mr. Bennoch proposed that they should publish the two works separately—the dramatic works first in the long days—then the other (of which there will be a volume to be written) in the long evenings. All is not quite settled, because Mr. Hurst (Colburn's successor) is out of town, but I suppose it will be so, and I must try for strength to do my part. I always expected the tragedies to be published after my death, and it seems like an anachronism to bring them out before.

July 28.

I HAVE been reading with absorbing interest Haydon's life. It is a most painful and most fascinating book, and people who knew far less of him than I, seem to feel it equally. It makes Moore's life, always frivolous, seem rags and tinsel in the comparison. Mr. Taylor has done his work admirably, as concerns the living, and as giving a most characteristic picture of the dead. But considering that there were twenty-nine folio volumes of journals, closely written, ledger-like books, and that one of the

three published octavos is filled with autobiography distinct from them, it seems to me he might have omitted the prayers and the bitter spite against the sitters. He of course wished to give a complete portrait, and he has done so. The man always reminded me of Benvenuto Cellini, and the book has the same character. I had forgotten the sonnet of mine which is included, and thought, till I saw it, that it was the earlier one inserted in the Dramatic Scenes.

Did I tell you that on the Thursday before his death, sending some things to be taken care of by Miss Barrett, he sent my portrait (a head cut out of a great picture larger than life, over-coloured but strangely like) as a present; then called and said he would only leave it as a loan—on Tuesday he killed himself. There is no mention of that episode of my portrait in the book (I dare say Mr. Taylor did not know it), and I cannot tell what has become of it.

I have been seeing a great deal of the Kingsleys lately. Charming people! He is not the least Alton Lockeish, but a frank, cordial, high-bred gentleman, and she just fit for a poet's wife. Do you know him? He says that he certainly either knows personally or has heard much of a Charles Boner, a very handsome dark man—living amongst German princes—a great scholar in many ways, and he thought author of "Chamois Hunting," &c. But then, that Charles Boner was originally of Edinburgh, and had three

sisters great beauties, very dashing, and one of them married to some celebrated man. I told him that my friend to whom the first part of the description applied exactly, was born at Bath, and educated for the most part in Devonshire, and that I had only heard of one excellent sister, whom I believed to be single. It mystified him exceedingly. I let him see what you say of the German poets, and then we talked of Poe.

If you know Charles Kingsley you are not likely to forget him, for he is a man after your own heart, who would go chamois hunting himself if he could, as manly a creature as ever lived and as gentle and courteous as manly men commonly are. He is seven or eight miles off unluckily, but does not mind it to come here, which is a great comfort to me.

Alfred Tennyson was with him lately, much softened and improved by the birth of his child. They are looking for a house near her friends, but would come here, Mr. Kingsley thinks, if we could find him a habitation. I should like that much. We are expecting Hawthorne every day. He sent me word the day after his landing at Liverpool, and he and his friend Mr. Ticknor (the great publisher of Boston, partner of my friend Mr. Fields) are only waiting dear Mr. Bennoch's leisure to come here with him and his wife. Mr. Ticknor's coming this year keeps dear Mr. Fields in America, but it is only fair that the other should come, and next year, if I be spared, we shall see that beloved friend. I wonder whether Hawthorne will talk or no! They say that for the most part he is perfectly silent,

grave, shy, almost morose, with brilliant but very rare half-hours. Well! if anybody can bring him out it will be Mr. Bennoch and Mr. Kingsley. They are frankness itself. What a nice letter was the Prince of Leiningen's! Our Queen's half-brother, is he not? and how entirely you have earned the pleasure you will enjoy. It must be very gratifying to find your work so appreciated by those who know best. God bless you, dear friend. Ever gratefully yours,

M. R. MITFORD.

Swallowfield,
Sept. 19, 1853.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

This will be a very shabby letter, because until I shall have completed my story, probably not till next May or June, I can write none but the shortest of notes; indeed, unless to distant friends, I have given notice that I cannot write at all. You must understand that I have a long tale, almost a novel, to write, and that the Plays and Dramatic Scenes will occupy two very thick volumes. All that I have yet done is to correct the proofs of perhaps half a volume, and finish the writing of the preface—fifty pages of letter-press probably, and more completely an autobiography than all the "Recollections" put together. If it please God to spare my life and intellects, I shall certainly give another series of "Recollections" when these two works are completed. Mr. Bentley counts upon it, and I get

letters about it, every day. The selections are so wanted for forming the taste of young persons, and there will, of course, be a mixture of other papers.

I hope that long before this reaches you your attack of rheumatism will have vanished. Are you doing too much in the way of exercise? I am convinced that I did, and even strength and youth will not stand against over-exertion. My own state is just as when last I described it to you—lifted up and down stairs and borne along upon level ground, and what is worst of all, unable to turn in bed when lifted there. I earnestly hope, dear friend, that you are before this time quite recovered, and that you have been able to enjoy the sport you love so well, with your princely host. What you tell me of your plan for a series of pictures of past German life is excellent. I think no work would be more likely to succeed. You must make it as rapid and as vivid as possible.

"Bracebridge Hall" was a little unreal and a little long. Being himself a copy, Washington Irving is a bad model. The most amusing books of that sort have been real. "The Memoirs of the Margravine of Bayreuth," and Thiebault's gives a capital account of Frederick the Great and his court. Have you met with Sainte Beuve's "Causeries de Lundi"—the Monday feuilletons of the "Constitutionelle," now by the admirable taste of *my* Emperor transferred to the "Moniteur?" I recommended them as a model to Mr. Willmott, the principal critic of the "Times," and he

is certainly following my advice; as, if you see the "Times," you will perceive. Nothing can be better than his late articles, rich, varied, and elegant, as fit for a series of volumes as for a newspaper. Do pursue your notion of old German life. It will be amusing, and you will have no rival in English literature.

I will be sure to tell Mr. Kingsley what you say. It cannot but please him. It is very odd that young James Payn, who arrived to-day about two hours after your letter, brought me a very fine print of him. These coincidences are commoner than they seem. James Payn's new volume will be very fine; he has been to Scotland and the lakes this year, where Harriet Martineau talked over *the* book with him, exculpating Mrs. Atkinson; and the glorious old Mr. De Quincey confessed that he was miserable from nerves and compelled to have recourse to a partial inebriation from opium. *He* (De Quincey) talks of coming to this neighbourhood, which seems almost too good to hope for, his conversation being the finest of the world. Adieu, dear friend. Believe me

Ever very faithfully yours,

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

Accidentally I have just seen a capital review of Chamois Hunting in "Bell's Weekly Messenger" for April 28th. It was a fragment in which some books were folded, and which Sam brought to me, knowing the interest I took in your success. It was very nice in him, was it not? He is a great reader himself, especially of newspapers.

Since beginning this letter I have been applied to for Haydon's letters, and had to look over five great boxes, trunks, and chests, two huge hampers, baskets innumerable and drawers without count. I discovered sixty-five, mostly very long. I have no doubt but I have still many more, but being almost blinded by the search, shall not trouble myself farther. That correspondence (if he wrote to many people as he did to me) will be a most interesting work. My contribution will, I should think, make a long volume. Have you seen the "Life?" It has had an immense success here; the greatest of the year.

January 30, 1854.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

First let me very sincerely and heartily wish you all the health, and happiness, and prosperity, which can be hoped for in this world, and many years in which to enjoy those blessings.

You are so good as to desire to hear from me, but my letters are necessarily bulletins of my own most wretched health. I have now been two months shut up in my own room, get with exceeding difficulty from the bed to the fire-side, unable to stir either in bed or in my chair, but much more comfortable in the chair than in bed; and here I must remain, I suppose, till May, when, if there be anything like summer weather, I may be lifted downstairs and into the pony-chaise.

Of course I see nobody, and have done all I can to discourage people from writing to me,—writing being most painful to me, as well as most troublesome, from rheumatic pains in the chest, so that I have very little news of any sort. The charming Margaret de Quincey (eldest daughter of the opium eater) has married a Scotch neighbour of the name of Craig, who has bought lands in Ireland, and is going to live in Tipperary. Henry Hope (eldest son of Thomas Hope) has bought a great estate there—Castle Blayney. They will not desert the Deepdene, of course, but £80,000 a-year kindly spent, must do good to Irish peasants.

You see the "Times."—Did you read the admirable evidence on the London Corporation by my friend Francis Bennoch? Nothing out of Parliament ever made so great a sensation. He has been to Paris since, and says that not only in beauty but in perfect drainage, supply of water and work-people's habitations, Louis Napoleon has done in two years all that we have been talking about and have not done in twenty. Tell me anything you hear of this great man. Dr. Arnold's son (Mathew Arnold) has published another volume of poems, which has shown considerable ability. Young poets swarm just now. I have a dear young friend who has just left Trinity College, Cambridge, and will be nothing else; a thousand pities, for he is a younger son and a charming young man, and to make the matter still worse he is going to be mar-

ried. Have you seen Dr. Doran's book? It is amusing enough, but too long.

I rejoice at what you tell me of your book. One of the pleasantest sporting writers—Mr. St. John—is lately dead, so is his half-brother. Both were sons of the Honourable General St. John, whose widow is an old friend of mine. Her son (not the author) killed himself by his own folly. Last year all the young men at Brighton used to walk on the cliff, smoking cigars, after leaving the ball-room at four o'clock in the morning. This young man, with the seeds of consumption in him, died, of course.

Think of your book on old German customs. It will be curious, and get it as close as you can, lively and full. A little tendency to length is your danger. But you may be sure that the "Chamois Hunting" has made a most favourable impression, especially on those whose good opinion you would most desire. God bless you, my dear friend. I hope your sister is well.

Ever faithfully yours.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

March 7, 1854.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you heartily for your affectionate sympathy, and although I write with exceeding pain and difficulty (for except the daily growing weaker there is little change in my condition), I

yet write to say that Mr. Fields is expected in England this spring, and that if you will write me such a letter as you would like him to see, it shall —if I be still alive—be put in his hands, together with "Chamois Hunting," and whatever I can say by way of good opinion of the writer. K.'s little boy is not to go to America till he is fourteen, and the house is not at New York but at Boston—Messrs. Ticknor, Reid and Fields, one of the greatest houses in the world. I also know Mr. Ticknor,—an admirable man. You can write to him if you like, only Mr. Fields is coming. I thought you ought to know this.

Of course my books have been reprinted over and over again in America. Even a superb collected edition with four of the tragedies, in Philadelphia.

Yes, *my* Emperor is indeed a man to be proud of. Tell me anything you hear of him, or of his sweet wife. I suppose the Countess Tascher de la Pagerie is now in Paris. Those papers are admirable. It is delightful to see the solemn coxcomb Guizot, and the little scamp Thiers, so completely put aside, and the governments and courts who held to one another's rottenness forced to come round. Can anybody depend on Austria and Prussia, especially the latter?

God bless you, my dear friend. How is your sister? Ever faithfully yours.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

Swallowfield, March 24, 1854.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I write only one line to tell you that Mr. Fields is expected here in May. I don't know at what time in the month, He will be to be heard of at Francis Bennoch's, Esq., 77, Wood Street, Cheapside; the time to find Mr. Bennoch there being from one to two o'clock at luncheon. He lives at Blackheath Park. I tell you this lest your poor old friend should be gone before May. Mr. Bennoch is expected here soon, and I shall do all I can to interest him in the cause, and put into his hands the "Chamois Hunting," and your two last letters.

Thank you for your admirable character of the Emperor and the King of Prussia. You are right as to our national ignorance of our nearest neighbours. But this ministry—especially Lord Aberdeen—seems to be quite imbecile. There is no hope but in the French and the English people.

I have had a great shock in the death of poor Judge Talfourd. He had spent two hours at my bed-side about a fortnight before, and being much affected at the state in which he saw me, all the old friendship came back upon both, as in the many years when my father's house was a second home to him. We both, I believe, felt it to be a last parting, though neither dreamed which thread of the cord would be so soon parted.

Remember me to your sister. You cannot doubt

how glad I should be to see you once again, though I am only equal to seeing any one from one to two hours a day.

Correcting the proofs of "Atherton" has almost killed me. The other stories (reprinted from annuals) I have not attempted to look at. I suppose both "Atherton" and the "Dramatic Works" will soon be out. God bless you.

Ever faithfully and affectionately yours,

M. R. MITFORD.

Swallowfield,
May 24, 1854.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

It is so difficult to contrive to send Sam into Reading, I myself wanting him so constantly, that I send this unpaid by our village post. I hope it will reach you. I am much as before, a little better perhaps of the pain under the arms and over the heart, but no stronger, and still confined as before to one motionless position in bed, and another when lifted out into my arm-chair. I shall, however, rejoice to see you. You must not come even to the house before three or four o'clock. It oversets me for many days to do so. Indeed very few persons are admitted at all. Let me know when you come. Of course K. will get you dinner. If you like children you will be charmed with our little girl.

"Atherton" is a most extraordinary success. It

was met by the whole press with enthusiasm, the "Athenæum" being the only cold notice, as it is the only one of which I know the writer; and not only did it go in five weeks into a second edition, but the fashion for it is such that Mr. Mudie told my publisher, Mr. Hurst, last week he had four hundred copies in circulation, and could not do with less. I requested my friend, Mr. Bennoch, to keep a copy for you. He read two of your letters, and was much struck with them, and desired me to say that he would gladly take your message for Mr. Fields, in case of your not coming to England. Mr. Fields was to have arrived at Liverpool on Friday last, but has deferred his voyage for a month, so you will meet. In the meantime, pray call at Mr. Bennoch's house of business. You will find him a very remarkable man in every way, and full of kindness. I hope you will get this letter, but that Reading post office is wretched.

God bless you, my dear friend.

Ever faithfully yours,

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

Swallowfield,
Thursday Night.

YOU will be sorry I know, my dear friend, but not angry with me for writing this letter. It is indeed necessary that it should be written, painful as it is to us both. I was so glad to see you, and so excited by your conversation that the fatigue and

the exhaustion were in proportion to the excitement, and on being lifted into bed the gasping for breath which now attends every exertion, became such a struggle that both K. and Sam thought me dying. This was followed by sickness and low fever. I am still suffering from the exertion, and must not risk a repetition. I have just written to the oldest friend in the world, requesting him not to come here, and I must make the same request of you. Let me know how you speed with royalty, and with that other royalty the booksellers, and all that interests you, for be very sure that I shall not lose my strong interest in you while consciousness remains. I take for granted you are not at Oxford. I write to Mr. Bennoch to ask him to procure for you a copy of "Atherton." Heaven bless you!

Ever faithfully yours.

Be very sure, my dear and most kind friend, that I have never for one moment ceased to recognize that the fault of your staying a little too long with me was exclusively mine. You were most considerate. Perhaps, however, the real fault lay in the great pleasure that your coming gave me, which is a delinquency that we neither of us wish less, for certainly there are very few whom I more sincerely love, esteem, and respect, or whose future destiny interests me more. I hope and believe that it will be bright and peaceful, such as a youth of virtuous activity has earned.

To-day brought me a most interesting letter from Mr. Kingsley. His sweet wife, the only realization of my idea of a poet's wife that I have ever seen, has had a dangerous relapse. She is now better, and her excellent husband is about to move her to a pretty place that he has taken in the north of Devon. He does not come to Eversley till August, when, if I still be spared, I shall see him. My breath has been a little relieved by strengthening and stimulating medicine, as much champagne and nourishment as K. can coax down, and the most absolute quiet. Even Lady Russell only stays five minutes.

I have not heard one word of Mr. Fields. It is really most singular. This silence has lasted three months, and the last letter I received was dated February, and had evidently been long tossed about. I know you will let me know all that interests you, especially if the rifle improvement carry you to St. Cloud. God bless my kind friend. Ever most affectionately yours,

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

Thursday, June 27, 1854.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

After becoming still more exhausted, so that on Saturday Mr. May was so far alarmed as to write himself to Mr. Harness not to come, but to keep away, I am for the moment a little revived by champagne and highly stimulating

medicine, and perhaps still more by a quietness all about me, which to one so excitable is the most needful of all. I am so sorry to know that you are in England and yet not to have the pleasure of another interview, but it would be grief to you whose kindness I so well know, to shake the last sands in the hour glass. I wait anxiously for to-morrow's letter, but I send this to-day to say that if Mr. Fields should not arrive before your departure, and if I (as is very likely) should be too ill to suffer him to come, I am quite sure that you might depend on my good friend Mr. Bennett to transmit any message you might wish. He is a person of the most perfect good faith. Remember that I gave into Mr. Bennoch's hands the copy of the "Chamois Hunting" which you gave me to be transmitted to Mr. Fields. Because the remainder of these letters was cheerful as usual, you none of you realized the idea of so total a failure of strength and power. He was to have come to see me with Mr. Fields, and if I am obliged to put off the latter I should earnestly desire him to know that my latest feelings towards himself were those of affection and of gratitude for many kindnesses. Of Mr. Fields I have heard nothing these three months, nor indeed of Mr. Bennoch except by an Oxford paper, which I wonder at his sending. How could he expect you to join such a party! Poor Lockhart. It is just what I heard of him at ———. A friend of mine who is intimate with Croker, wrote to me the other day that he had

been to see him. His pulse in the morning had been twenty-four! But his faculties were as keen as ever. God bless you, dear friend.

July 5, 1854.

I SEND you, dear friend, what you have the great goodness to request. With your kind and interesting letter to-day came one of remarkable beauty from Mr. Tom Taylor, to whom I had written about my letters to Haydon. The plan of publishing them is given up—I mean the correspondence altogether. Sir Charles Eastlake would not give Haydon's letters to him. No wonder! The life had shown his base ingratitude already, and there was a great fear then that those of Wilkie would also be withheld by *his* representatives. I am glad of this, and very glad of Mr. Taylor's letter. It is worth noting that the only distinguished man of that Oxford party did not go.

I shall be most anxious to hear more of your rifle invention. No doubt you are a better judge in such matters than many men in the army. I remember how instant and how true some of the shots were in your charming book—it cannot but add to your reputation in every way. The Emperor Louis Napoleon would be capable of appreciating such an improvement. I have only read the preface to his "History of Artillery," but that is charming. I will finish to-morrow. God bless you.

I have letters to-day from Mr. Bennett and Mr. Bennoch, both full of your praise.

M. R. M.

Swallowfield,
July 20, 1854.

My Dear Friend,

Your most interesting letter is just arrived. Thank you for it. I rejoice that you have seen Paris. To me this Napoleon is even a greater man than his uncle. He has not the terrible deduction of the coarser and vulgarer fame belonging to the soldier and the conqueror, and has done what was so difficult, won a second great name in spite of the tremendous rivalry of his predecessor's renown. Moreover, happier than the first Napoleon, he learnt in adversity to command himself. I wish you had seen the Taschers and him.

Mr. Bennoch has undertaken to send you my dramatic works. I hope you will like them. I don't know how many of my plays you have read. At present the taste for the drama is extinct in England, but some day or other it may revive, and then it will be a good thing to have gathered these tragedies together. Perhaps you have already got them. If so, write on the chance of my being still spared to say how you like them. "Otto and Max," which have never been acted, seem to me to be quite as good as "Rienzi," which went one hundred nights. With these volumes he undertook to send two

proofs on India paper, one of the engraving from John Lucas' picture, the other of a miniature taken when I was a child.

Mr. Fields was so seized by sea-sickness that he stopped at Halifax and put back to Boston, so neither he nor the Brownings come to England this year. I wrote him a long letter about the "Chamois Shooting." I hope Mr. Bennoch will send him my copy which I gave him for that purpose, but you had better write too, for the Bennochs are going their annual tour, this year to the Shetland Isles. Two of my other friends want Mr. Fields to be their publisher—Mr. Willmott and the Brownings. So you will be in good company. I told him as I believe that your book would be equally creditable and profitable. One of the few friends whom I admit spoke of it to me the other day as a work which she had recommended far and wide. She is a sister of Sir W. P. Wood, the new Vice Chancellor. Mr. Field says that the success of "Atherton" in America is immense. He says "The newspapers and periodicals are all outvieing each other in words of praise. No book for many years has been received with such an outburst of applause."

Old Mr. Landor sent me yesterday the most beautiful verses I think, that he has written. I dare say he will print them. I am told too that Dr. Parsons (author of the matchless lines on Dante) has addressed an exquisite poem to me. I have not seen it. And now, dearest friend, farewell. We have had

three days of intolerable heat which have tried me much. All blessings be with you. Ever affectionately yours.

September 5, 1854.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am delighted at your liking the engraving (a very bad one) from Mr. Lucas' fine picture. The other was a miniature of me at three years old, and is certainly a most attractive and nicely executed little portrait. I am so glad you have them. But you will find the true portrait of my mind in the Tragedies and the Dramatic Scenes. I have not in the preface told any part of the real story of these plays. The fact was that, by the terrible uncertainty of the acted drama, and other circumstances, I was driven to a *trade* when I longed to devote myself to an *art*. Read those plays attentively and study their construction, and you will, I think, see that *that* was my vocation. Indeed the success of "Rienzi" was something unprecedented upon the, at that time, modern stage; and in "Foscari" (much better acted) ladies used to be carried out fainting and in hysterics. At all events I have now rescued these plays from the misprints of Cumberland (who preferred to copy the blunders of the actors instead of the words of the author), and the new plays from the dangers of MS. Everybody says that the two new tragedies "Inez de Castro," and "Otto of Wittelsbach," are amongst the best,

the latter perhaps the very best; and, come a great actor or a great actress, you will see them acted. The preface was written this time last year. I do not think that people have a right to give pain, and therefore I have abstained from stating any particulars that must have done so. Tell me when you have read these plays how you like them. I may be gone when your letter arrives, but there is a chance of my still surviving; perhaps only a small one, but still a possibility. Although I know I am in my death sickness and may sink any day, yet for the last week there has been a rally, not making any real change, but still an amelioration, for which I am thankful. I am wasted to skin and bone, but the present treatment of such cases amongst the highest practitioners is admirable. Casting away arrowroot and jellies and all such trash, where there is a large bulk and little nourishment, they give extracts of game and turtle soup, small quantities of the most nutritious food. For instance, I take in the morning half a tea-cup full of grouse soup, and in the evening the same quantity of turtle prepared for the sick at the London Tavern, with old cognac and water, and stimulating medicines between. I have heard of many persons kept alive for months by turtle soup, the lightest and most nourishing of all food, but this I do not expect. I thought, dear friend, you would like to know all about me.

We have seldom, I think, spoken of religion. I always firmly believed in the Divine Mission, but I

used to worry myself about the manner of it. This long visitation, however, has been, I firmly believe, sent in mercy to draw me closely to Him. I have read the whole of the New Testament through once, the Gospels twice, and am now going through them again for the third time; and I feel that the mystery being above our finite faculties, the only way is to take it exactly as it is written, and throw ourselves on the mercy of God through the great Mediator.

I have a most dear friend, Hugh Pearson, now travelling in Switzerland with his bosom friend, Arthur Stanley,* author of the "Life of Dr. Arnold." Hugh Pearson is exactly a younger Dr. Arnold himself. He administered the sacrament to me before he went, and if I be spared will again on his return, a fortnight or three weeks hence. I have another most dear friend, my oldest and my best, the distinguished London clergyman, William Harness; him I also expect, although he be now at the princely demesne which Mr. Hope has just purchased in Ireland. I tell you this because you will like to hear it. So much for my unworthy self. Mr. Fields says in the postscript of a letter just arrived, "'Chamois Shooting' has been published here." This is every word. I have written to him desiring him to write to you himself and to give you the particulars, giving your full address at St. Emeran.

* The present Dean of Westminster.—ED.

How sensible in the Princess to send her boys out in that way with you. They must have enjoyed it. God bless you, my very dear friend. Ever faithfully yours,

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

Swallowfield,
October 2, 1854.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I answer you myself, because both K. and Sam hate writing to their betters, and they do so much for me that I do not like to encroach on their willingness; but my letter cannot be long because I have so very, very many to write every day, and the writing at all is, I know, so bad for me, that I avoid the task as much as possible. This avowal must make you pardon me for not sending your poems to Mr. Kingsley. He is in Devonshire, not at Torquay, but at some other place in the northern part of the county which he has taken for the summer. I do not know his address. We see each other when he comes to look after his curate, and we hear of each other, but we do not correspond. He is overwhelmed with business, and, my dear friend, I wonder that your knowledge of the world has not taught you that people who write verse themselves are precisely those who care least about the verses of other persons. The very last time he was here he pulled out a packet of slips just arrived from another friend of mine which he had not read, and evidently did not intend to read. So if he came here now, I, from

sincere regard for you, should abstain from putting yours into his hand. Well, before quitting this authorship question, I must tell you that Mr. Fields wrote me word that "Chamois Shooting" had been reprinted in America.

Now as to myself. From the day of your visit, when I had so nearly died, till about a month ago, I continued to grow weaker and weaker, and worse and worse. My death was expected from week to week, from day to day, from hour to hour. Mr. May, however, in spite of his immense practice, of my distance from Reading, and of his bad opinion of the case, did not abandon the stranded ship, but continued to watch the symptoms, and to exhaust every resource of diet and medicine, as if his fame and fortune depended on the result. This union of friendship and skill has prolonged my life, and I am certainly better than a month ago; though still confined to my chair night and day, sitting on a water-cushion, with no other change than from being propped by air cushions, to having my feet lifted on another chair. It has not been thought safe to risk the exertion of my being lifted into bed. However, I am still alive, although dear Mr. Pearson, after administering the sacrament, took leave of me in this world, on accompanying Arthur Stanley to Switzerland. He is returned, and I am not yet dead. Still the first breeze will probably, certainly, (humanly-speaking), carry the withered leaf from the tree, though at present the symptoms are improved. Mr. Ben-

noch will no doubt let you know any decided change. I rejoice in what you tell me of yourself, your own good health, your dear sister's recovery, the fortunate expedition of the young princes, and your repeated visit to the Prince of Leiningen. To be his guest a second time proves a very real liking for your society.

I have had all sorts of packets from America, letters and messages from almost every man of eminence in the literature of that great country. Such letters, such messages, and such notices of my books as show a personal feeling so strong that I wonder how I can have deserved such goodness. "Atherton" is selling enormously. By the way, you have never told me how you like that and the plays. Here and in America "Atherton" is thought my best story. Mr. Fields has had a fine engraving from John Lucas's picture prefixed to the American edition. I hope he will bring some copies when he comes in April. Let me hear anything you know of my Emperor. The Germans seem to lean to Russia. God bless you, my dear friend.

Ever affectionately yours.

Nov. 20, 1854.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

It is, indeed, one of the most merciful alleviations of this long dispensation that my faculties, such as they are, remain clear and unclouded, my

sympathies as warm as ever; that whilst the poor body has been so severely smitten, the head and the heart are untouched. I even retain the healthy interest in every-day things, the common work-a-day doings of this life of ours, which tend so much to lighten and gladden existence. Blessed with this power, it would be strange indeed if I did not feel with and for my friends. I must try to get my book back from Mr. Bennoch (lent him to show Mr. Fields), for that would stand a far better chance to interest ——— than any poetry. I mean the "Chamois Hunting." He being a great fisherman and foxhunter, and probably a good shot, looking more like a weather-beaten sportsman than a clergyman, with the walk peculiar to men who ride much and well, your talk on that subject would interest him certainly; whether your book would is a different matter. I never saw him interested in the slightest degree by any other author, except, indeed, one of his own followers or his own clique, and then only as admiring and helping *him*. He has great kindness and great sympathy with working people, or with a dying friend, but I profess to you I am amazed at the utter selfishness of authors. I do not know one single poet who cares for any man's poetry but his own. In general they read no books except such as may be necessary to their own writings; that is, to the work they happen to be about, and even then I suspect that they only read the bits they may immediately want. You

know the absolute ignorance in which Wordsworth lived of all modern works; and if, out of compliment to a visitor, he thought it needful to seem to read or to listen to two or three stanzas, he gave unhesitating praise to the writer himself, but took especial care not to repeat that praise where it might have done him good,—utterly fair and false. So was Talfourd when he thought it needful to repay praise in kind. Only a very few, like Scott and Southey, are above this weak baseness, and these are certainly not the rising men of this day, whatever may be their merits in other respects. The public is the only critic or patron worth propitiating, and you, if writing with rather more life and fire (for those are the points you want), condensing and energising your matter, and making into one volume what you think enough for three, may certainly take an excellent rank as a prose writer. To be a poet you must live, if not wholly in England, yet amongst the English, and there are too many really fair writers of verse to make the attempt worth while. I am sure that this is sound advice.

I cannot tell you how glad I am that you like the Dramatic Works. That preface is said to be my best bit of prose, has been reprinted in almost every paper in the American States, and over and over again in the English journals. The books are getting gradually into the great private libraries of our large country houses, and of course into all

public libraries, so that there they may wait for the chance of some great actor or great actress arising and taking a fancy to them. I agree with you in preferring "Otto of Wittelsbach" to the others. With a real actor it would be far more effective than "Rienzi." The contrast would be so telling, because there are glimpses of tenderness in the first part, and returns of spirit in the last, which would humanise the character.

I am so glad that you like it, because if there had been any great sins against old German character or manners, you would of course have been revolted. But, indeed, without any seeking after accurate costume, where there is the dramatic faculty *it comes*. There is an instinct which travellers tell me makes Foscari Venetian, Rienzi Roman, Inez Portuguese. It belongs to the dramatic faculty, and cannot be supplied by imitation. Nothing (except Racine) can be so unlike Euripides as Mr. Justice Talfourd's "Ion," and that play will assuredly not live. It wants toughness of fibre. I find people very enthusiastic about these dramas—I mean people worth pleasing; and have little doubt of the rank they will take, though they may have long to wait for it. A more complete biography than might be made out of that Preface, "Recollections," "Belford Regis," and "Our Village," can hardly be. But the probability is, that my life-long friend and executor William Harness, will collect my letters and make a series of volumes.

Mrs. Browning, to whom at one time (that is to

say, for many years) I used to write two or three times a week, always preferred those letters, written in a far more complete abandonment than anything I should do in the way of autobiography, to any of my writings. Professor Tom Taylor meant (from the same impression) to have inserted all I would have permitted of my letters in Haydon's correspondence, and John Ruskin, to whom I also write with the same *laisser aller*, professes the same opinion. You, to whom I have chiefly written as a sort of English correspondent, a letter of news to a friend abroad, can hardly, perhaps, judge of these frequent and habitual epistles where the pen plays any pranks it chooses.

I do not know that William Harness has any such intention, but he is a thorough man of letters, living in the very highest literary society. Dean Milman and he corresponded when one was at Eton and the other at Harrow. Mrs. Siddons had sittings in the two chapels where he was alternate morning preacher, that she might always hear him. He refused the dedication of "Childe Harold." He got for Sir Walter Scott the place next to his own at the coronation dinner. He was the literary executor to Thomas Hope, and is just now the actual executor of Charles Kemble; having a passion for the drama, which used to make people accuse him of helping me in my plays, whilst they said I helped him in his sermons, neither being true. Only last week he

was talking with John Murray about an article on me in the "Quarterly," which J. M. admitted was merited, and which they owed me.

I will now tell you a little literary news. Tom Taylor was the author of the "Punch" verses on the "German Fatherland," reprinted in the "Times." This I hear and believe, but don't quote me as your authority. Mr. Ruskin is giving lectures on ornamenting houses by borders enlarged from those in illuminated MSS. They are exquisite—I mean the enlarged borders, for he brought them to show me three weeks ago; and so no doubt are the lectures, for he speaks even better than he writes. Mr. Bennoch has refused a requisition to stand for Coventry. Mr. Fields is married to a beautiful New England girl, the daughter of one of the principal physicians of Boston. The Brownings are getting on with their respective volumes. His is a series of lyrics, of which she has only seen a part. Hers is a fictitious autobiography, of which, though four thousand lines are written, she has not shown him a single line.

Poor Lady Russell is ten years older since the battle of the Alma, from suspense and anxiety. Nothing can exceed the mismanagement of the English Government or their folly. The only hope is in the French. The English miscalculated everything, and had not a notion of the power of the enemy. Then look at that idiotism of sending fine ladies to a military hospital! The great surgeons are all indignant.

Christmas Day, 1854.

A MERRY Christmas and a happy new year to you, my very dear friend! and as many years full of peace and comfort as can well be wished for in this world, to you, and to the sister with whom I always take for granted your lot will be cast. A good and dear sister is, perhaps, the safest and best companion after the years of youth and passion have gone by, and her experience in the same foreign land will give to her all the habits, English and German, which you would perhaps miss with one whose ways were exclusively those of either country. You hardly know yourself how German you are, but an English wife would make you feel it perhaps painfully, by feeling it very strongly herself. I dare say that in Germany you seem more English than you do here; and then the German wife would be too German. So you see I have settled for you a bachelor household; brother and sister. The happiest and most refined *ménage* of London (that of William and Mary Harness) is such. He has one of the new churches at Knightsbridge. They have a pretty house in Hyde Park Terrace, nearly opposite the old Great Exhibition. He has lived more than forty years with all that was best and highest in art and literature in London, and still sees all that there is left of literature in the closest intimacy: indeed, in all London there is nothing like his dinners for pleasantness and ease. A female cousin lives with

them. She is well off and contributes to the housekeeping, but she would have been still more certain of sharing their home had she been poor. One widowed brother (Captain Harness, R.N.) lives near them: another brother, Major Harness, R.A., is sent about to set things in order, whatever Government happens to be in power. Their children are doing well. They keep three maids and hire waiters, and William Harness is perfectly the social equal of Mr. Hope with his eighty thousand pounds a year, and Lord Lansdown with his prestige of rank, fortune, age and character. This is much to the honour of London, for William Harness, incurably indolent, has never by any great work vindicated his own high talents, but is accepted as Bennett, Langton, and one or two more of that day, were, purely on the ground of delightful conversation and high personal character. This is a good precedent for men of moderate means, especially to those who know how utterly untractable the man in question is; a Harnessite on all points of politics and theology. It would have been as easy to convert David Deans from, or to, any opinion great or small. His father having given my mother away, and our being brought up together, has always been among the happiest accidents of my life.

I have to thank you, my dear friend, for a very beautiful book, to which I earnestly wish all the success it deserves. At present no book *sells*. The only one that is spoken of at all is Lord Carlisle's flimsy work, which it owes partly to its subject, and

partly to its being the work of a lord who disdains no sort of cant that may bring him popularity—cant of liberality, cant of benevolence, cant of patriotism, cant of religion. However, your book, having no temporary interest, can afford to wait. What is become of your book on old German manners? *That* very rapidly written (I don't mean in a short time, but vividly, without pausing upon this or that—fast as contradistinguished from slow), so as to make a short small book out of a quantity of material, would make a name and be as good as a Life Annuity. Think of this, and get such a work ready against people read again. What is sad, is that in America, where there is no war, the stagnation in the trade is even worse than here.

Dear Mr. Fields, who has just married a beautiful young wife (they are said to be the handsomest couple in New England), has not even ventured to take a house (think of that!) and seems to anticipate that he shall be unable to visit Europe this year. He says that the prospect ahead is so gloomy that he dares not look at it, and to any one who knows his exceedingly sanguine nature and English tastes and magnificent habits, this picture of such a bridegroom taking rooms in a boarding-house, and anticipating a universal crash in the American book-world, is astounding.

The most striking book that I have seen for a long while is a dissenting novel, "Philip Lancaster," dedicated to myself. The writer is a young girl,

and the book is full of every fault of which idleness and carelessness can be guilty. The mere removal of textual repetition would make it two volumes instead of three, but then it is full of character and of talent, tells much on all subjects, knocks down humbug to the right and left. Beyond all doubt, if she chooses to give herself a common chance, M. M. may be a great novelist, but I doubt if she will. She belongs to a family of rich paper-makers, is a most charming person, accustomed to have her own way. If ever you can, read "Philip Lancaster"—you will see how racy and original she is. I have been reading Madame Sand's Memoires in the Feuilletons of the *Presse*. What a pedigree it is! and what charming bird-stories there are, and how delightful a correspondence between her grandmother and her father. Only one feels so certain that the correspondence has been touched up, if not entirely manufactured, and that the whole autobiography is, and will be, a *plaidoyer* for the exceptional woman, and not a narrative of events as they happened. Dear, dear John Ruskin sent me some Swiss books, "René le Fermier," and two or three more by the same writer, with excellent morals, and very vile Swiss-French. Just the reverse of Madame Sand. You do not care for style as I do, which is lucky for you as a reader, but then that same dear friend has sent me his own Giotto plates, and a book on that school even more eloquent than anything he ever

did before, a perfect storm of eloquence that takes one by assault.

Well, dear friend, you will ask how I am. I grow weaker and weaker—fall down two steps; climb up one!—never regain the point I have lost. Do you know those pretty make-believe old books, "Mary Powell," "Milton's Courtship," and many others? The author, whom I know only by correspondence, I love and respect exceedingly. Her letters are admirable. Oh! I have been reading that frightful spirit book of Judge Edwards—"Spiritualism:" which has driven so many people mad in America, and is doing the same here. God bless you. Ever affectionately yours,

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

END OF VOL. I.

BILLING, PRINTER, GUILDFORD.